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Anime & Manga Monthly

ANIMERICA

August, 1993
Vol. 1, No. 6

Exclusive! The ANIMERICA Interview
APPLESEED Creator

MASAMUNE SHIROW

Part Two of Our Exclusive Interview

Hayao Miyazaki

Manga Features

MERMAID FOREST by Rumiko Takahashi

AD POLICE by Tony Takezaki

Special Color Manga Feature!

THE CRIMSON PIG by Hayao Miyazaki

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Masamune Shirow, The Über Artist

About him very little is known. Where does he come from? What does he look like? And most importantly, why do some people consider him the reason for the current manga boom in America? We couldn't get him to part with any photos, but **Albert Sze-Wei Wang** and **Yumiko Yamamoto** manage to take a peek.

The ANIMERICA Interview

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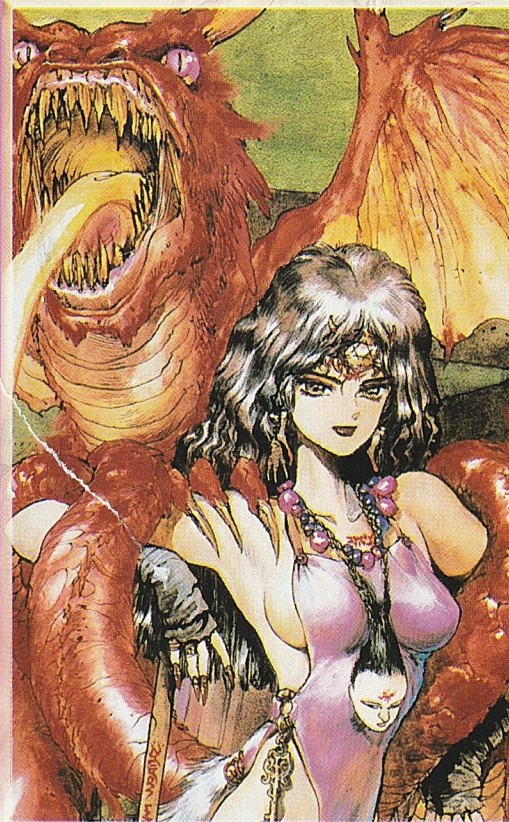
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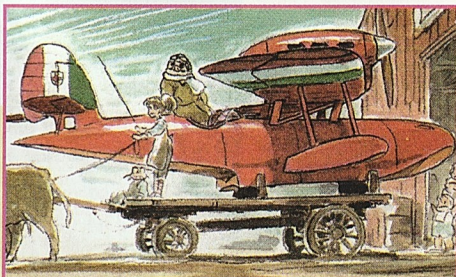
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FROM THE EDITOR

The Taming of the Ewe.

I thought about keeping it quiet. But then I thought hey, you guys can handle it. Some of you (especially those of you with Internet access) have been wondering when and if I would voice-act again. Some of you have been wondering what role that would be. Guys, sit down. I have something to tell you.

It's in *Outlanders*.

It's Kahm.

Yes, yes, I know. Before you get the rope, I want to tell you how much fun I had in recording my first major role. It was very different from the bit part I had in *Macross II**. Director Jenny Haniver had me trembling and hoarse at the end of each day ("More volume! More projection!"), and sound maestro Les

Claypool III wasn't exactly easy on me, what with all his "Make it more sexy, Trish!"-type comments. (See, Les? Told you I wouldn't forget.)

I have to say, I never realized how funny *Outlanders* was until I sat down and listened to it with my partner at Studio Usagi (okay, so I translated it, too—it's a very small industry!). When I first saw it, years and years ago, I didn't speak much Japanese and I had *no idea* what a sexy little comedy it was. I'll let you guys make up your own minds as to how well all of us did in bringing that lighthearted erotica across, but if you guys have half as much fun watching it as we did making it, then you're in for one of the funniest OAVs you're likely to see this year (objectivity cheerfully thrown out the window).

While I was in Los Angeles, I also had the opportunity to hang out with the guys at L.A. Hero. As always, Ken Iyadomi was the perfect host and I even got to have dinner with Shoji Kawamori, immortal mecha designer of *Macross*, in town for a top secret project which I'll tell you more about in a later issue (yes, yes, I know).

The next day a group of us visited the set of director Steve Wang's new *Guyver* live-action movie. We even got to crawl around on the sets while Mr. Kawamori kept saying, "Whoa, how cool!" and "Look at that!" Steve—who grew up in the Bay Area watching *Star Blazers* just like a certain Editor of your acquaintance—told me the complete story for the new movie but made me promise to keep it a secret. What I *can* tell you is that this more serious, *dark-er* sequel will take place a year after the first movie and will feature a whole new cast of characters (plus some really great suits). Release is scheduled for "sometime in 1994."

Other neat things I got to do that weekend included meeting the legendary Noriko Takaya (yes, the guys at Gainax really did name the *Gunbuster* character after her!) and visiting the creature shop of a certain well-loved Japanese live-action series currently filming in the area. I'm sorry I can't say more—they'll never invite me back if I spill the beans! But I do promise to print it here first just as soon as I get the okay.

As usual, I was sorry to leave L.A. but glad to come back to beautiful, windy San Francisco. Carrying around my PowerBook with me, even typing up notes on the plane, I really got the feeling I'd inadvertently wandered into one of those AT&T commercials. I've got to admit, the idea of sending faxes from the beach is really appealing....

Here's to the '90s!

trish

Trish Ledoux
Editor

C'mon, guys...how hard can it be!? There's only something like three emulators with lines in that part of the sixth episode—you've got a one-in-three chance, for crying out loud! I'll give you until the end of this month to send in your letter or postcard with the line I spoke as an emulator in the sixth episode. First one gets a special prize...not to mention my eternal admiration. (But make it quick, willya!?)

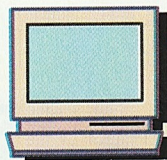
Contributors



Albert Sze-Wei Wang (Anime Feature) is still suffering for the cause of anime. Between a fellow staffer's toxic cocktails, the overpowering heat in the video rooms and the chance of being cut in half by stray gunfire at a Guest of Honor shooting expedition, Albert came this close to perishing in the line of duty in his role as Vice-Chair of Anime Expo '93. Have you given any thought to life insurance, Albert...?



Art Director Yoshiyuki Higuchi's smiling visage belies the intense pressure and stress he's under as the man with the keys to the Viz Kingdom (where do you keep those ANIMERICA backups, Yoshi...?). A good example of how one's college major has next to nothing to do with career choice, the former philosophy major wants you all to know that he's trying to lay off the distracting back-grounds in his layouts (really!).



For someone who's sacrificed her social life for her work, the worldwide computer network **Internet** (especially the "Miyazaki Discussion Group") has become a very important social surrogate for a certain Editor of your acquaintance. (Hey, there are worse ways to spend \$17.95 a month.) We check our e-mail every day, and look forward to hearing your comments, criticisms and suggestions at viz@netcom.com.

ANIMERICA

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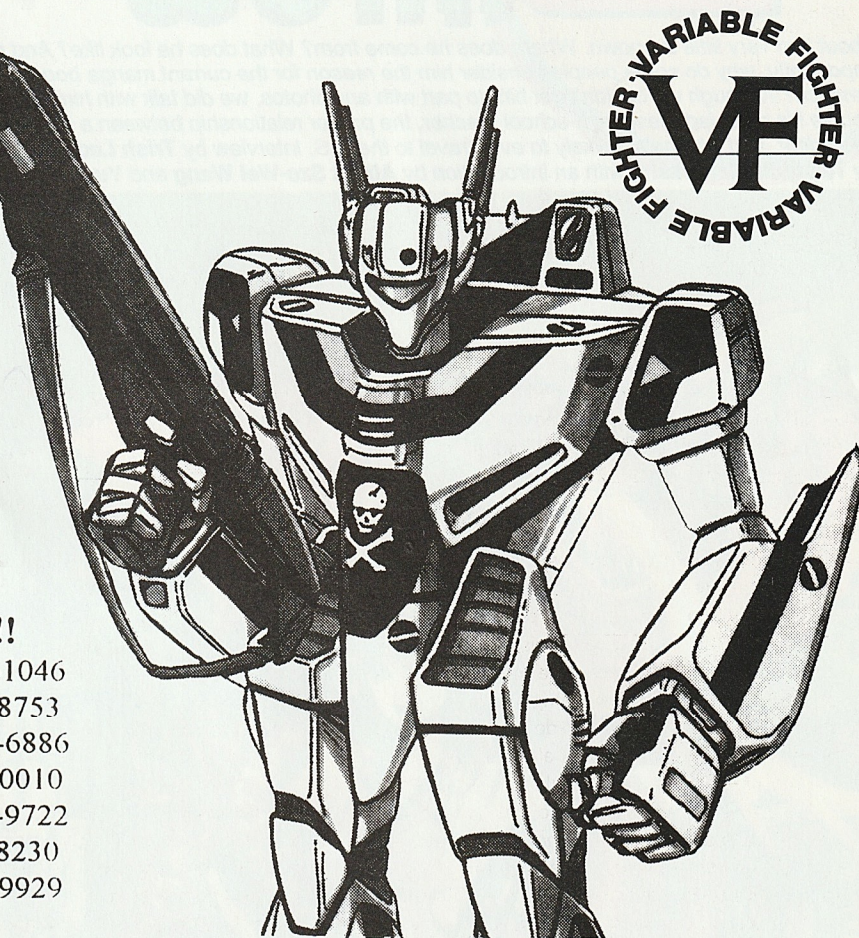
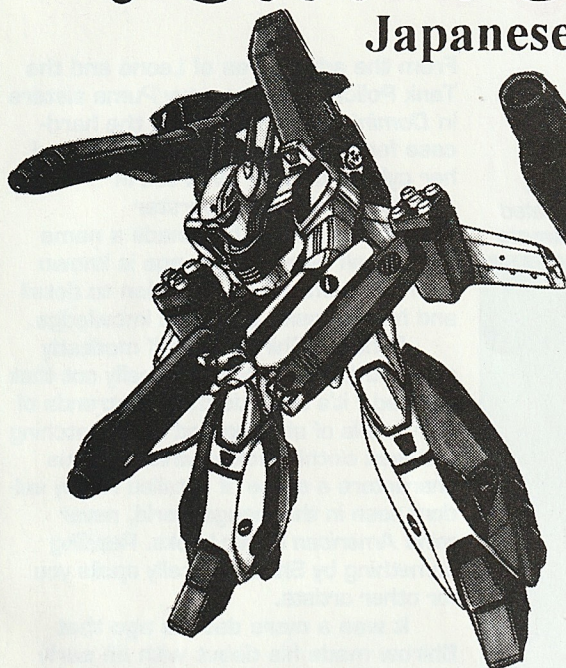
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The Crimson Pig
Story and Art by Hayao Miyazaki
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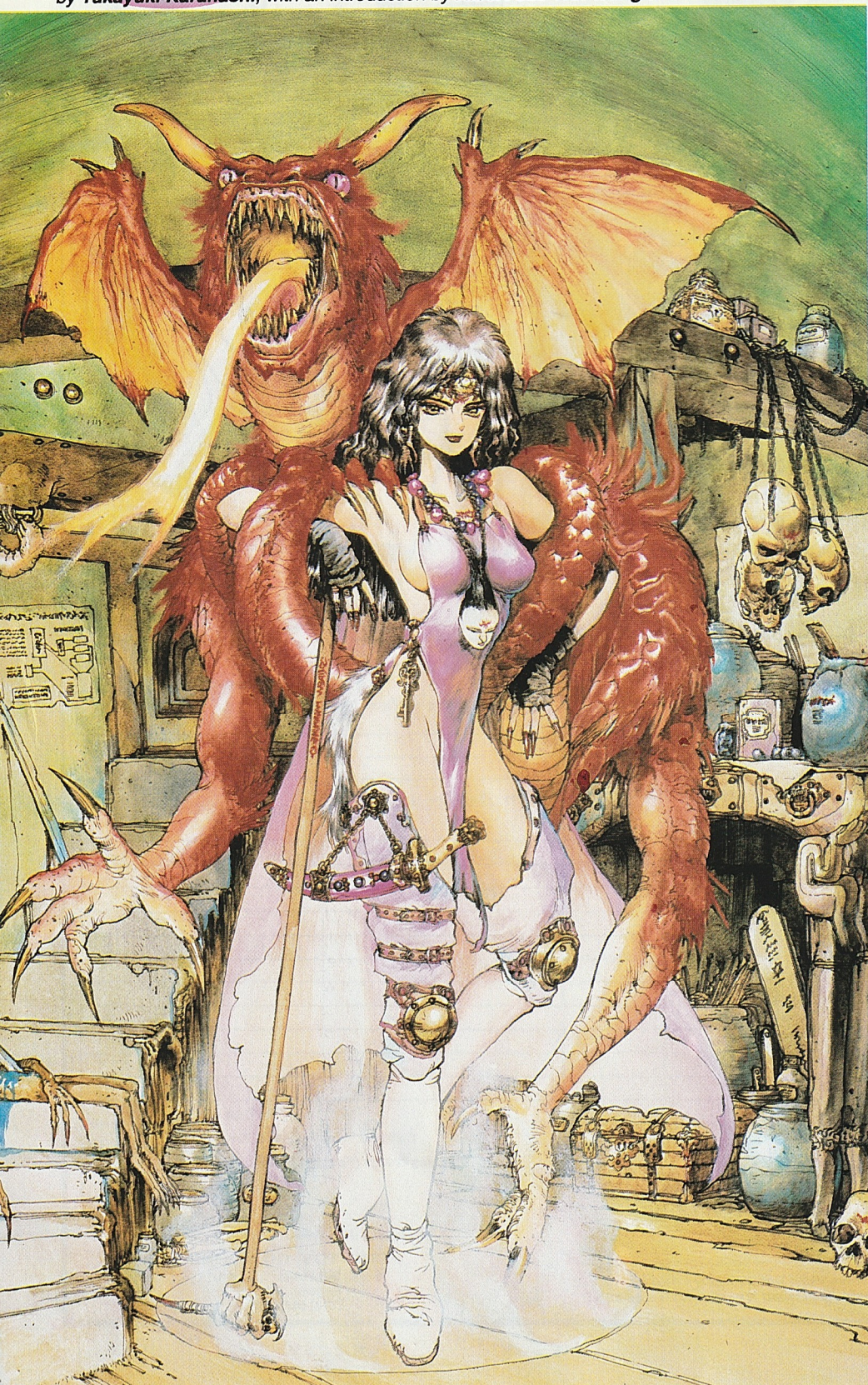
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Exclusive! The ANIMERICA Interview

Masamune Shirow

The Über Artist!

About him very little is known. Where does he come from? What does he look like? And most importantly, why do some people consider him the reason for the current manga boom in America? Although we couldn't get him to part with any photos, we did talk with him about his double life as a Japanese high-school teacher, the proper relationship between a manga artist and editor, and why he's unlikely to ever travel to the U.S. Interview by Trish Ledoux, translated by Takayuki Karahashi, with an introduction by Albert Sze-Wei Wang and Yumiko Yamamoto



From the adventures of Leona and the Tank Police vs. those sexy Puma sisters in *Dominion*, to the trials of the hard-case female police officer Deunan and her cyborg partner Briareos in *Appleseed*, manga superstar Masamune Shirow has made a name for himself wherever manga is known with his tremendous attention to detail and his extensive technical knowledge.

Although Shirow himself modestly claims that his artwork is "really not that detailed," it's the little things—strands of hair, levels of shading and cross-hatching between clothing folds—which give his characters a sense of detailed reality seldom seen in the manga world, never mind *American* comic books. Reading something by Shirow literally spoils you for other artists.

It was a mere decade ago that Shirow made his debut with an early version of what would eventually become the popular original animation video *Black Magic M-66* ["M" for "marionette"—Ed.] in the Japanese manga fanzine "Atlas." Urged by an editor at the small Osaka-based independent publisher Seishinsha to "go pro," Shirow would not publish again until three years later when his manga opus *Appleseed* was finally completed in 1985. Shirow credits the constant support and encouragement he received from Seishinsha's president Harumichi Aoki for making the series possible in the first place.

"You could say that I was slowly enticed into becoming a manga artist little by little," Shirow jokes, "but by far the biggest reason has got to be that early meeting with Mr. Aoki." Subsequent manga projects with Seishinsha would include 1988's *Orion*, first published in Seishinsha's manga anthology *Comic Gaia* and later published in English by Dark Horse Comics, as well as the recent *Ghost in the Shell*. As with their earlier English-language *Appleseed*, *Orion* features production by San Francisco-based Studio Proteus, with translations by the estimable Fred Schodt (*Manga! Manga! The World of Japanese Comics*) and Proteus' own Toren Smith.

"*Appleseed* and *Ghost in the Shell* are relatively international works," says Shirow. "They transcend national boundaries. Even native speakers may have different reactions to the multiple meanings I've built into the story through the Japanese characters. For example, the nine-headed beast called

a 'naga' which appears in *Orion* could be read *kutoryu* in kanji, which could then be corrupted to 'Cthulu,' which is obviously a reference to H.P. Lovecraft's octopus-shaped mythological creature. The 'cubular warheads' are a double pun on the Japanese word *kaku*, meaning both 'cubular' and 'nuclear.' It goes on and on."

As if his work wasn't reason enough to become fascinated with this multi-talented artist, many fans have indulged themselves in speculating why such an otherwise "normal" person (he's a high-school teacher) would want to lead a double life as a manga artist. Photos of the reclusive artist are as rare as inexpensive cels at American anime cons, and it's not as though "Masamune Shirow" is his real name, after all.

Shirow says that although "Masamune" is the name of one of the finest swords in Japanese weapons-making history, he actually prefers "Masakuni" which, unlike the more high-toned Masamune, is a "strong, usable-in real-live-combat kind of sword with a great balance." Shirow jokes that these days, "Masamune" is used primarily for naming brands of sake.

The name "Shirow" comes from "shi-," meaning "samurai," which can also be read as the combination for "ten" and "one," meaning "eleventh-born" [it can also refer to his November birthdate—Ed.]. The "-row" part of his name comes from "young man." Shirow tells us that it also refers to his love of kendo (Japanese sword-fighting) as a child, followed by judo in junior and senior high school.

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of Shirow's stories is how they explore the social, economic and political aspects of human existence by seeing through the eyes of the characters themselves, all ordinary people with different personalities, values and beliefs. In many ways, Shirow's stories flow so much like a film that panels seem to take on a life of their own, captivating the reader until the episode resolves itself at the end of the volume.

"From the fan letters I read, I'm guessing that overseas readers like the same scenes as readers in Japan," Shirow says. "It's really a pity that the only way a manga artist can judge how well he's doing with his readers is through the sales of his books."

Through the efforts of Dark Horse Comics and Studio Proteus, Masamune Shirow is on the verge of achieving cult status among English-speaking anime and manga fans everywhere. Let's hope that trend continues.



More important than making manga read like some kind of technical manual is making it interesting.

ANIMERICA: Your female characters are usually very good at what they do and very, very dangerous. Many of your male characters, on the other hand, tend to be weak and inefficient. Does this reflect a personal belief, or do you feel that it just makes a better story?

SHIROW: I don't think that *Appleseed's* Briareos or *Orion's* Susano or *Ghost in the Shell's* Chief and Bato are weak or inefficient. I'm not sure I'd say that *Appleseed's* Deunan or *Orion's* Seska are particularly smart or dangerous, either. However, considering that my main characters are usually women, there may be some truth in what you say [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: How important to you is scientific and technological accuracy in your work? It seems obvious in works such as *Appleseed* and *Orion*, but what about *Dominion* or *Ghost in the Shell*? Have you spent a lot of time trying to make the science and technology in these works accurate?

SHIROW: For me, manga is entertainment, so scientific accuracy isn't that important. More important than making manga read like some kind of technical manual is making it interesting.

ANIMERICA: Let's talk about your background and training as an artist.

SHIROW: I've always enjoyed drawing, but it wasn't until my work was published in a fanzine named "Atlas" that I became active as a manga artist. It was published by a group of friends...I was nineteen at the time. Even before then, I was drawing caricatures of my teachers in the margins of my grammar school notebooks and doing illustrations for the school newspaper.

ANIMERICA: What about teaching? When did you begin that career?

SHIROW: I went right into teaching after graduation. The idea of becoming a full-time manga artist had never occurred to me, you see. For various reasons—my frustrations toward the Japanese educational system and how well *Appleseed* was received, to name a few—I ended up becoming the professional manga artist I am today.

ANIMERICA: Have you studied formally? Or do you consider yourself to be self-taught?

SHIROW: No, I've never trained as a manga artist per se, but it's the works I draw every day which are my real training. I did attend an art school in Osaka where I studied oil painting and sketching, but that's so fundamentally different from manga that the only thing I use today from what I learned in those days is maybe some hand control.

ANIMERICA: Would you say that you're influenced by the work of other artists in your field?

SHIROW: It wasn't until recently that I started to read manga or even go to the movies. *Space Cruiser Yamato* was the big thing when I was in junior high, but because I didn't care for its nationalistic or militaristic overtones, I never watched much of it. In high school, *Gundam* was popular, but I was an athlete and so the only time I got to watch it was when I was home with an injury. *Macross* started around the time I was drawing *Black Magic* and it did reach something inside me, but now I feel that if it had satisfied me completely I would probably have stayed in the audience rather than becoming a manga artist.

ANIMERICA: So you have been influenced by other artists, even if it's only to go out and create some animation of your own.

SHIROW: Yes. When I was working on the animated version of *Black Magic M-66* I

There's an unfortunate tendency in the anime industry to think of manga artists as outsiders, or as nothing more than the generators of raw material for animation.



concentrated very intently on the techniques of Hayao Miyazaki, who was then and is still now reigning over the Japanese animation industry. Looking back at *Appleseed* now—not that it's finished yet!—I seem to find nuances strongly reminiscent of Katsuhiro Otomo. In the mainstream film industry there's Terry Gilliam and...oh, there's too many for me to list.

ANIMERICA: Is manga the best forum for your work? If not, what would be?

SHIROW: Well, there's anime, of course. But there's also an unfortunate tendency in the anime industry to think of manga artists as outsiders, or as nothing more than the generators of raw material for animation. So there are some things I need to resolve before I go into the animation studio again. Whether manga is the best forum for my work or not...well, since I'm only doing manga right now, I can't say. Becoming a filmmaker holds a certain appeal, but the Japanese film industry has been tired and worn out for a long time now, not like Kurosawa's heyday. I don't think there's much room for the kind of films I'd like to make.

ANIMERICA: Which part of drawing manga do you like the least? Which parts of drawing manga do you like the most?

SHIROW: I'm happiest when I'm thinking up a story, the major props, the stage and the characters from scratch. I'm most unhappy when being late and missing deadlines forces me to let an unsatisfactory work go out into the world.

ANIMERICA: Speaking of deadlines.... What's your impression of the relationship between a manga artist and his publisher and editor?

SHIROW: The manga artist honors deadlines and doesn't draw lines too fine to print or tones that'll come out black. The editor doesn't interfere with the work unless the artist is going way over the line. I don't know what it's like with other artists and their editors but for me, I think my editor and I are in an almost ideal relationship of symbiotic trust...except for the universal demand to draw more and more pages, of course [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: I find it interesting that despite cultural differences—or perhaps *because* of them—manga is gaining more acceptance worldwide these days than ever before.

SHIROW: I think the popularity of manga overseas these days owes a lot to Japanese animation, even to Nintendo. We've got a whole generation growing up overseas thinking that anime and manga is just one more form of entertainment and not just some strange, cultish thing from Japan.

ANIMERICA: Compared to success in your native Japan, how important is international recognition to you?

It would be foolish of me to delude myself into thinking that international recognition somehow makes me more important, but I do feel proud that my name is known overseas.

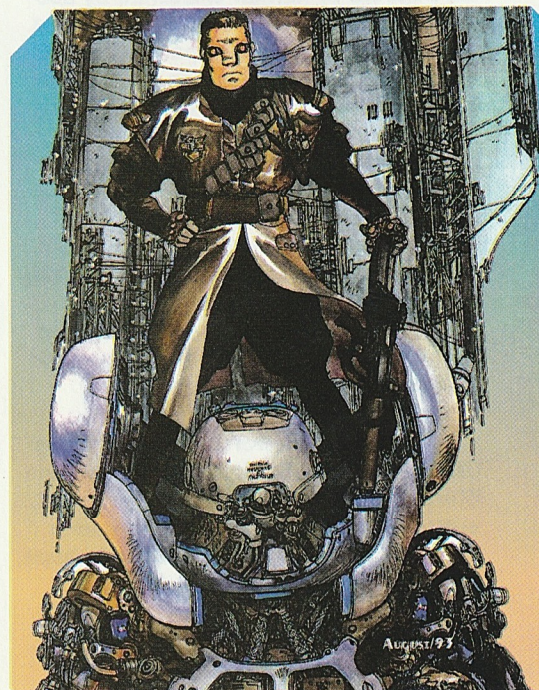
SHIROW: Oh, I'm very pleased. It would be foolish of me to delude myself into thinking that international recognition somehow makes me more important, but I do feel proud that my name is known overseas. It also makes me feel that I can't get by with half-hearted art anymore. Not that I can get by with it in Japan, of course—it's just that I now feel an additional obligation to create manga that's truly original and entertaining.

ANIMERICA: Is there a particular manga you feel most proud of? Are there any stories you wish you could go back and re-do before they were published?

SHIROW: Just as parents can't choose to love one child over others, I love all my manga equally. I don't want to go back and re-birth any of them. Unlike childbearing, though, giving birth to manga lets you carry over your frustrations and regrets to the next creation, hopefully making it better. That's one thing you can't do when you're bearing a child [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: One often-used word in describing your manga style is "detailed." How do you feel about this? Is it essential to your work or have you ever thought about using a different art style?

SHIROW: The impression that my manga is "detailed" comes from the details of its content—in reality, the art is not that precise. If you want detail you should look to the art styles of Katsuhiro Otomo, or to the older stuff by Akira Toriyama [*bestselling author of Dr. Slump and Dragon Ball—Ed.*] This "detailed content" is important in works like *Appleseed* and *Ghost in the Shell*; it's not so crucial in works like



Dominion and *Orion*. Detailed art is something beyond the reach of the average manga artist publishing a weekly serial—the artist just can't do it without an army of talented assistants. For an artist like myself, who publishes about as frequently as Halley's comet, precise detailing is essential to making my works more readable. Also, I simply like to fill in those teeny-tiny little details [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: How did you come up with the idea for the landmate? Some of your fans with backgrounds in engineering wonder if it's based—even a little—on the research now being conducted in the area of human-synthesized movement at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

SHIROW: It was quite a while ago, but I do remember seeing a black and white photo of an exoskeleton made by General Electric in a *Time/Life* book once. That was probably the source of my idea for the landmate. I wasn't aware that it was also being researched at MIT...I wonder what they're going to use it for? The master/slave system is even older. I believe the prototype for the landmate came about when I saw the "magic hands" being used in the medical sector. I'm sure the powered suits in Heinlein's *Starship Troopers* were another inspiration.

ANIMERICA: What sorts of books are in the Masamune Shirow reference library? History texts, combat handbooks, firearms guides...? Your references to tactical gear and weapons systems seem so well-researched. Where do you find your reference for combat and SWAT scenes?

SHIROW: Half of it is imported books of military mecha, strange cars, art books, sculpture books, etc. The other half is Japanese books. A quarter of those are biotech books, micro-machine books and non-fiction military robot books, plus a little Greek mythology. Other than that, there are books on insects; I especially have quite a lot of books on bees. And then I of course have a lot of dictionaries and lots of magazines sent directly from the publishers. I average seventeen to eighteen titles a month. Although I'm not sure it counts as reference, I have about the same number of manga as my imported books.

ANIMERICA: So many of your works have been animated. What are your feelings on the animating of your manga stories? Are you involved in the production?

SHIROW: My first involvement was with *Black Magic*. The plan was originally to animate the "Venusian" story directly...the animation company just came knocking on my door one day with the project proposal in hand. I wasn't happy with the idea and didn't want to animate that story, so I drew up storyboards for *Black Magic M-66*. My beginner's curiosity lured me into becoming part of the staff; I even ended up directing it. Although the end result of the animation itself was satisfactory, my relationship with the other staff at the studio ended on a sour note and I was reluctant to become involved in another project. That's why my only involvement in the *Appleseed* OAV was to give the project my signature and stay otherwise uninvolved. Animation is a group effort. In order to make a good

considered as taking place in one loosely connected universe. There may be a few discrepancies with that, though... [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: As one of the earliest "manga" stories published in English, *Appleseed* has attracted a lot of attention in this country. What was your first reaction when you heard that your manga would be translated into English?

SHIROW: I was about 70% delighted and about 30% stunned that my manga could ever be published abroad. I worried about flipping the art and letting the reader's eye flow horizontally rather than vertically, as the eyes of Japanese readers do. Having my work appear outside of Japan was a real learning experience.



work you pretty much have to put together your own hand-picked team. In preparation for the day when I return to the animation studio I'm stockpiling storyboards and plots. When I do become involved in animation again—when I have the time—I want to be involved in every possible aspect of production.

ANIMERICA: Do you see the manga and anime worlds of *Appleseed*, *Dominion*, *Black Magic* or *Orion* as connected, or do you see them as separate, independent worlds?

SHIROW: Well, ostensibly they're all set in different worlds, but I suppose they could be

ANIMERICA: How much longer will you continue *Appleseed*? Is the end of the story in sight?

SHIROW: I'd like to take a break after *Book Five* comes out. There are other stories I'd like to draw. I haven't decided on anything specific yet, but I do have several ideas in mind on how to bring the story to a stopping point which can also serve as the conclusion of the entire series, should I make that decision. After all, by the time I get there, I'll probably start thinking about even more stories and then I won't be able to put an end to it [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: Your *Intron Depot* art book is proving to be very popular among your fans in the

U.S. Will we see more art collections like this in the future? What about *Exon Depot*?

SHIROW: I plan to publish it as *Intron Depot 2*, once I've collected enough color works to fill the pages. It'll definitely be a different sort of book than the first *Intron Depot*. It looks like the publication of *Intron Depot 2* will be about three to four years down the road. *Exon Depot* will be released long after *Intron Depot 2* is published.

ANIMERICA: Tell us about Masamune Shirow the man. Do you have any hobbies? What do you do when you're not working on manga?

SHIROW: These days it's nothing more exciting than painting accessories and bottles, I'm afraid [LAUGHS]. Another hobby is making pen shafts and grip handles, although I'm not sure this counts since it relates to my work [LAUGHS]. I guess I'd have to say that my main hobby is my work...I really don't have many other outside interests. I do enjoy window shopping or watching TV with friends.

ANIMERICA: Are you interested in traveling to meet your overseas fans someday? In America we hear that you're a very shy person and don't enjoy making public appearances.

SHIROW: I think America is a very attractive country, but I just don't like planes. If I had time, I'd love to come at least once. I'd have to travel by boat or dirigible, though [LAUGHS]. Honestly, though, so long as my manga is published abroad, there's



really no need for me to travel in person. My work is a part of me. If that is kept alive overseas, then so am I. After all, I should think my readers would be able to get to know me much better by reading my manga and in an interview like this than by talking to me in person [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: Being read is the highest compliment a reader can pay to an author, after all. But what if you *couldn't* be a manga artist? What would you be then?

SHIROW: I taught art at the high school level for five years after I was graduated from college. If for some reason I hadn't become a manga artist, I believe I would still be teaching....Then again, no, maybe I would have quit anyway [LAUGHS].

So long as my manga is published abroad, there's really no need for me to travel in person. My work is a part of me. If that is kept alive overseas, then so am I.

ANIMERICA: What advice would you give to someone just starting out as an animator or comic artist?

SHIROW: My advice is not just for comic artists or animators but for people in any occupation. Once you make your choices and decide to head in a particular direction, do it with all your might—push yourself to the limit and be as aggressive as possible...without being a nuisance to others, of course [LAUGHS]. If the most passion you can conjure up for something is "Maybe I could be a manga artist someday," then you're bound to be discouraged at the first sign of trouble, no matter *how* talented you are. After all, they say that the ability to work hard is a big part of what we call "talent."

ANIMERICA: In closing, do have a word for your English-speaking fans?

SHIROW: Enjoy my manga, see you in my next work, and may God bless you. ★

ANIMERICA would like to thank the many people who made this interview possible including Mr. Aoki at Seishinsha, John Weeks at Dark Horse, Masamune Shirow himself for making time in his busy schedule and last but not least, the gang on Internet's rec.arts.anime (especially chief researcher Albert Sze-Wei Wang), whose enthusiasm for and contributions to the promotion of anime and manga are bringing Shirow's sci-fi tales to life even as we speak.

ANIMERICA Special Report

Seishinsha, The Little Publisher That Could

Ranma 1/2's Rumiko Takahashi and Shogakukan. Battle Angel Alita's Yukito Kishiro and Shueisha. Akira's Katsuhiro Otomo and Kodansha. When a mega-talent of Appleseed creator Masamune Shirow's caliber signs on (and sticks with) a tiny independent publisher like Seishinsha, you know they've got to be doing something right. Special correspondent **Takashi Oshiguchi** reports from Osaka on just why Seishinsha thinks it can.

It's a fact of publishing life that in Japan, manga publishers are concentrated in the Tokyo area while most artists live in Tokyo or its suburbs. This phenomenon isn't limited solely to manga; indeed, all culture spreads across the nation from its Tokyo epicenter. It's well-known to almost everyone in the industry that manga published outside of Tokyo is unlikely to receive national attention.

Osaka-based Seishinsha, the publisher of Masamune Shirow and other unique manga talents, has succeeded in doing just that. It is the only publisher which has. Established over a decade ago, Seishinsha is a modest publishing house with a scant twenty employees whose introduction of Shirow's *Appleseed* in 1985 first brought them to the attention of bookstores and readers all over the country.

Seishinsha began its relationship with Shirow when its forty-something president, Harumichi Aoki, first met the soon-to-be manga superstar at one of the many gatherings he was fond of hosting in his Osaka home for amateur artists. The goodwill and convivial relationships Aoki had nurtured for so long (even before the founding of Seishinsha) with manga artists of every

level of proficiency paid off when then-college student Masamune Shirow dropped by for a visit.

Knowing a good thing when he saw it, Aoki recommended that Shirow make his debut as a professional artist and stood by the fledgling creator for three years, until the publication of *Appleseed* in 1985. The event overturned the pet industry assumption that manga artists must debut from a big Tokyo-based publisher to be taken seriously. When a flood of fan letters and commissions from Tokyo publishers came in with the then-unknown Shirow's name on them, it was clear that Aoki's long shot had paid off in spades.

There's no doubt that if Shirow had been toiling under one of the major Tokyo publishing house's overworked editors, there's no way he would have been suffered the time to complete his three-year manga opus. That *Appleseed* was published at all is testament to Seishinsha's support and belief in Shirow. That good working relationship is made evident in their publication of Shirow's recent retrospective *Intron Depot*, a work which could only have been published by an artist and a publisher working together as a well-oiled unit.

Seishinsha also publishes their *Comic Gaia* anthology as a kind of hot-house for new and budding manga artists. It is a place where the talent of a hopeful artist such as *Pixy Junket* artist Pure can bloom to its fullest potential. Clearly influenced by Shirow's art style, Pure's own characters—especially his charming young girls—are worth taking notice of.

Seishinsha's ability to bring exciting and unique works to manga fans everywhere by artists such as Masamune Shirow and Pure is something we can all be grateful for. Who will be the next Shirow to emerge from this little independent publisher that could? Only time will tell.

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Jo Jo's Bizarre OAV

First published in 1987 in the world's bestselling manga magazine, *Weekly Shonen Jump*, Hirohiko Araki's long-running, generation-spanning, genre-defying *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventures* is finally set for release as an original animated video starting this fall.

For several years now, there have been rumors that this difficult-to-describe, 31-compiled-volume manga series by creator Araki (better known in the U.S. as the creator of *Baoh*) would be animated by this or that studio. Publishing megalith Shueisha's announcement that the series would be released as a two-volume original animated series this fall has laid further rumors to rest—*Jo Jo* is finally coming!

The storyline, which begins back in the nineteenth century, spans the generations to tell the tale of the series' fourth main character, set during modern-day Japan. The (small) segment set to be animated is taken from somewhere in the third part of Araki's long-running storyline, with "Jotaro Kujo" (read it Japanese-style to see where the familial moniker comes from) set to star as the main character.

The occult aspect comes from a form of tantric magic known as a "stand," a visible aura analog as unique to individuals as finger or retinal prints. With names taken from the major arcana of the tarot, stands are highly representative of each character's destiny and are likely to be among the most interesting part of this new animated story.

The story begins when a stone mask is found amongst ancient Aztec ruins in Mexico. Touching blood to the mask while wearing it causes spiny bones to

protrude violently from the inside, piercing the brain of the wearer and turning the victim into a kind of vampire. Dio, antagonist from the first series, is one of the first to fall prey to the mask and begins a generations-long hate-hate relationship with the Joestar family which ends in Dio being immobilized...at the cost of Jonathan's life.

In the third part of the story, Dio returns from the grave to persecute the Joestar family once again. It seems that all over the world, people are mysteriously manifesting the ability to create stands. Jotaro's mother (daughter of the second series' Joseph Joestar, grandson of Jonathan) is among those to develop this terrifying new ability. But rather than making her more powerful the stands are starting to kill her, and together with father Joseph, son Jotaro must join with other stand users to track down Dio and destroy him utterly before his mother dies.

Direction on *Jo Jo's Bizarre Adventures* is by Hiroyuki Kitakubo with art direction Junichi Hayama. Production is by A.P.P.P. Each volume is scheduled for 35 minutes. No price has been set. Look to ANIMERICA for more details as they develop.

Romantic Fantasy and Heroic Legends This Fall

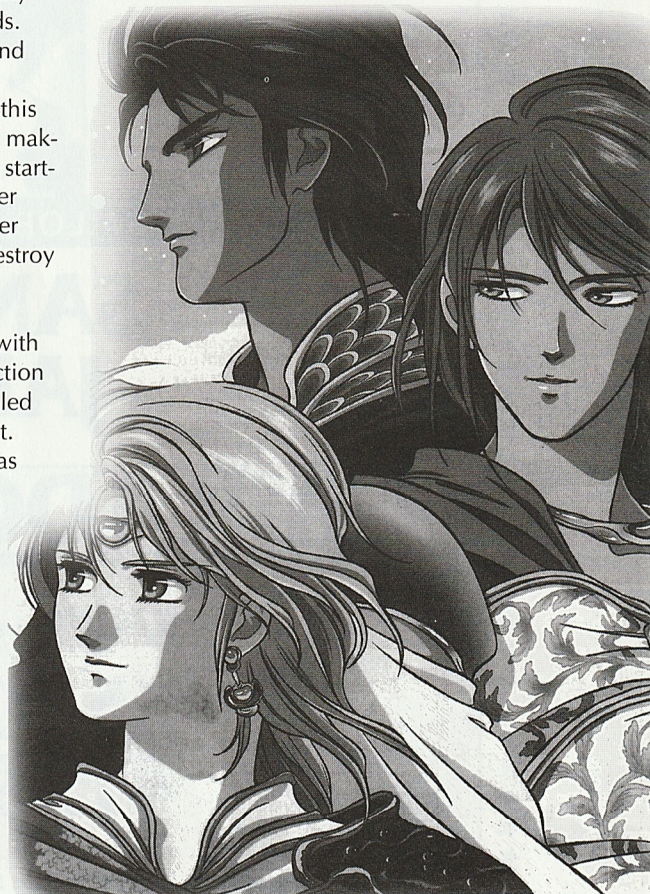
For two summers in a row fans have been treated to the gorgeous animation of Kadokawa Shoten's *Heroic Legend of Arslan* theatrical releases. This summer, fans can own their own piece of the excitement when *Arslan* makes the jump to an OAV format this fall.

Based on the novel series by Yoshiki Tanaka (*Legend of the Galactic Heroes*), *Heroic Legend of Arslan* is the story of a brave but youthful prince named "Arslan" who must fight along with his faithful followers to recapture the capital of the Kingdom of Palse as well as its king when invading forces take both king and country hostage.

As with the two *Arslan* theatrical releases, direction is by Tetsuro Amino (*SD Gundam*, *Starship Troopers*), with character designs by Sachiko Kamimura (*Venus Wars*, *City Hunter*). Art direction is by Shinji Koshitomo. Production is by Kadokawa Shoten and Sony Music Entertainment. The first *Arslan* movie was released as a double feature with *Silent Möbius* in 1991; the second film was a triple feature with *Weathering Continent* and *Silent Möbius II* in 1992.

Producers say that in order to animate the story they want to tell, at least ten original animation video episodes (at thirty minutes each) will be required. Currently, only *Parts III* and *IV* are in production.

Fans may expect to see the first installment of the *Heroic Legend of Arslan* series beginning "sometime this fall."





Graduating into Animation

"Graduation," the Japanese video game industry's answer to the juvenile "Choose Your Own Adventure" fiction series, is set to become the first in a (hopefully) long line of animated features when manufacturer NEC Avenue releases their popular RPG as an original animated video sometime in the near future.

The story of five beautiful but confused girls in dire need of the counseling and guidance only *you* can give, the focus of NEC Avenue's *Graduation* OAV will shift slightly from the viewpoint of the teacher (i.e., player) to concentrate on the story of the friends and family of the troubled high school seniors.

"Since the finer details surrounding the teacher couldn't be explored in the game, in the video I'd like to concentrate on the personality of the teacher and the girls' family," says *Graduation* creator Juzo Rokugatsu. "Keeping the animation quality of the OAV up to the standards of Masaki Takei's still shots for the game is probably going to keep the production staff up late for a long time."

With production by Studio Domu, first up on the schedule is the creation of a four-minute promotional video set to the music from the game. The single-shot OAV is scheduled for approximately 30 minutes; release date and price have not yet been set.

Tokuma's Mighty Lance Points the Way to Summer

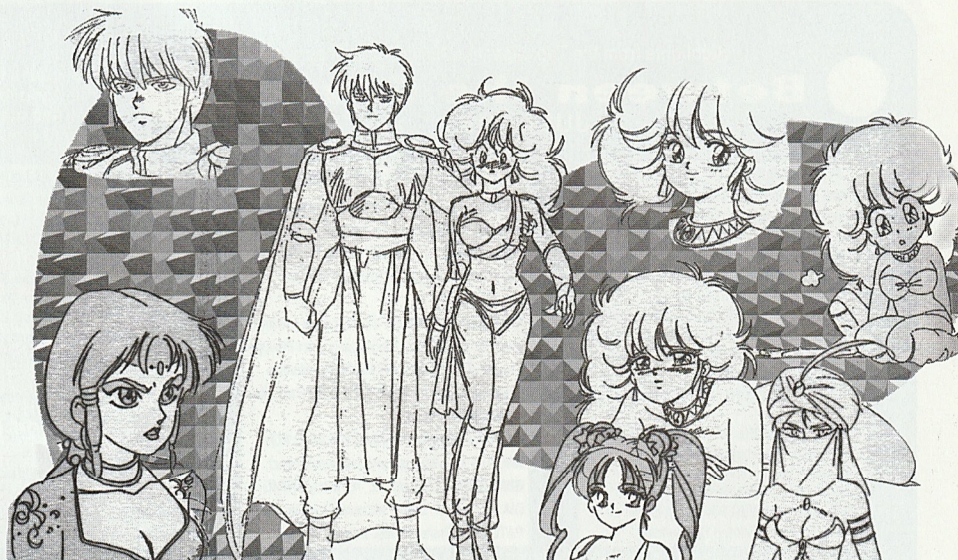
The recent trend toward making role-playing games into OAVs comes to a definite peak this summer with the release of *Lance* from Tokuma, an animated RPG with a decided etchi or "lascivious" slant.

Regardless of whether it's based on something serious like *Record of Lodoss Wars*, *Wizardry*, or *Ys*, or even something on the more comical side such as *Fortune Quest* [see "Dateline: Japan," June '93—Ed.], animated versions of popular role-playing games is big business in the anime industry these days.

New from Tokuma Communications this summer is *Lance*, the erstwhile-computer-game-cum-OAV which tells the story of a treasure hunter claiming to be the best-looking man in the world who'll do just about anything for money. The only thing *Lance* loves more than money is (you got it) women.

Accompanying *Lance* on his erotic adventures is Shil Pline, *Lance*'s magic-user and sometimes slave who alternately fights and "comforts" (wink, wink) the manly hero. A typical scenario goes as follows—a girl (beautiful, of course), gets attacked (you know what *that* means) by thieves (cads!). *Lance* (da-da-da-DAH!) comes to the rescue. *Lance* then demonstrates to the hapless wench what his name *really* means....

Lance is scheduled to be a 30-minute single-shot OAV released through Tokuma Communications. Look for release sometime this summer. ★



News You Can Use—Hot Off the Presses!

HOT FLASHES

It's been eight months since the first rumors of a new *Macross III* OAV series broke. Under the working title "Macross Plus," an unidentified industry source revealed recently that not only will there be a new OAV series released (four 40-minute volumes), but a full-length 120-minute feature film as well.

The story takes place 100 years after the events in *Macross II*, "Lovers Again" when a drastically updated Valkyrie takes center stage along with its youthful test pilot. The heroine is a sort of virtual reality "idol," modeled closely after the character of "Eve" in *Megazone 23*. Computer graphics will play an important role in the new series. Staff is currently said to be immersed in researching the field.

Yamato, take off! *Space Cruiser Yamato*, that venerable anime classic beloved all over the world, is set to return as an all-new theatrical release featuring character designs by Hiroyuki Kitazume (*Char's Counterattack*, *Gaiarth*) and mecha designs by Makoto Kobayashi (*Zeta Gundam*, *Double Zeta Gundam*).

The story is set approximately thirty years after the events in *Final Yamato*. A 50-year-old Kodai, known to American audiences as "Derek Wildstar," will make a special appearance and is said to be the only regular character from the television or film series who will appear in the new film.

Look to ANIMERICA for a special exclusive mini-interview with Kobayashi in our next issue.



It's the Experts of Justice versus the Foglersphere in the third and most exciting episode yet in director Yasuhiro Imagawa's lushly animated *Giant Robo* OAV series from Amuse/Bandai Visual.

"The Fall in Shanghai" depicts the Experts' plan to use the electro-magnetic net wire system to launch the Foglersphere into space before it can destroy Earth's last oil fields (located in Shanghai, naturally). Attendees of a special sneak preview at this year's Anime Expo were left on the edges of their seats, literally crying for more after director Imagawa screened a working print of the episode said to have been spirited away before even the Japanese production staff could get a look at it.

Look for "The Fall in Shanghai" on video on August 21. ★

VIDEO CLIPS JAPAN'S TOP TEN

The Bestselling Animated Videos, Compiled by Original Confidence Research Company (As of 5/3/93)

- 1 **New Century GPX Cyber Formula 11 • Volume Two**
VAP • ¥4800
- 2 **Bastard!! 5**
Shueisha/Pioneer LDC • ¥4500
- 3 **Ranma 1/2 TV Titles**
Kitty • ¥3800
- 4 **Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon 2**
Toei • ¥3100
- 5 **Fist of the Dragon Tiger**
Pony Canyon • ¥4800
- 6 **Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon 1**
Toei • ¥3100
- 7 **Space Knight Tekkaman Blade • 7**
King • ¥5800
- 8 **Irresponsible Captain Tyler S-2**
VAP • ¥4800
- 9 **Irresponsible Captain Tyler S-1**
VAP • ¥4800
- 10.. **Ah! My Goddess 1**
Kodansha/TBS/KSS • ¥5800

WHAT THEY SAY THEY'RE WATCHING

The Top Ten Anime TV Shows in Japan Based on Anime Magazine Readers' Polls [From 4/11/93 thru 5/10/93]

- 1 **LOVELY SOLDIER Sailor Moon R**
TV Asahi • Saturdays @ 7:00 p.m.
- 2 **Ghost Sweeper Mikami**
TV Asahi • Sundays @ 8:30 a.m.
- 3 **The Poltergeist Report**
Fuji TV • Saturdays @ 6:30 p.m.
- 4 **Irresponsible Captain Tyler**
Tokyo TV • Mondays @ 6:00 p.m.
- 5 **Dragon Ball Z**
Fuji TV • Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m.
- 6 **Mobile Suit V-Gundam**
TV Asahi • Fridays @ 5:00 p.m.
- 7 **Miracle Girls**
Japan TV • Fridays @ 5:00 p.m.
- 8 **Ribbon of the Little Princess**
Tokyo TV • Fridays @ 6:00 p.m.
- 9 **Papua of the South Seas**
TV Asahi • Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m.
- 10 **LITTLE WOMEN Nan and Jo**
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 7:30 p.m.

...AND WHAT THE RATINGS SAY THEY'RE WATCHING

The Tokyo Top Ten Anime TV Shows Based on Rating Shares Compiled by Video Research (During the Week of 6/10/93 thru 7/10/93)

- 1 **Sazae-San**
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 6:30 p.m.
- 2 **Dragon Ball Z**
Fuji TV • Wednesdays @ 7:00 p.m.
- 3 **The Poltergeist Report**
Fuji TV • Saturdays @ 6:30 p.m.
- 4 **Encyclopedia Kiteretsu**
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 7:00 p.m.
- 5 **Crayon Shin-Chan**
TV Asahi • Mondays @ 7:00 p.m.
- 6 **Get a Grip, Tsuyoshi**
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 6:00 p.m.
- 7 **Doraemon**
TV Asahi • Fridays @ 7:00 p.m.
- 8 **Papua of the South Seas**
TV Asahi • Saturdays @ 7:30 p.m.
- 9 **LITTLE WOMEN Nan and Jo**
Fuji TV • Sundays @ 7:30 p.m.
- 10 **Manga Folk Tales of Japan**
TBS • Saturdays @ 7:00 p.m.

Highlights from the Top Japanese Anime Magazines

Between the Covers JULY, 1993

ANIMAGE (Tokuma)

NEWS & UPDATES: 15th Anniversary Issue Includes THE PAPAUA TIMES • "Summer Gals '93," SAILOR MOON, AH! MY GODDESS, GHOST SWEEPER MIKAMI, TYLER • "Before Departure into Space," Story Breakdown for V-GUNDAM Episodes 15+ • More

REGULAR FEATURES: Top Ten Characters • Love Horoscope • Anime Karaoke • Animation People • Let's Go to the Movies • TV Animation World • OAV Hotline • More

SHORT STORY: "Letter from the Red Devil," by C.W. Nicol

MANGA FEATURES: NAUSICAÄ OF THE VALLEY OF WIND by Hayao Miyazaki • YADAMON by Suezzen • LITTLE MOLE MOGUTAN by Noriko Nagano

GIVEAWAYS: CYBER-FORMULA Book • "Cover Illustration Gallery" Supplement

ANIMEDIA (Gakken)

NEWS & UPDATES: 12th Anniversary Issue Includes "Best Character Twelve" • "Twelve Predictions for Current TV Shows" • "Twelve Key Combat Scenes" • Summer Movie Update • More

REGULAR FEATURES: Video Journal • Anime-Eye • TV Anime City • Media Land • Idol Pin-Up • Line-Art Section: SAILOR MOON R • Monthly Close-Up • New TV Show Voice-Actor Data File • Movie News • More

MANGA FEATURE: WHIRLWIND WILD BOY ARCO by Miku Nanase and The Arco Project
GIVEAWAYS: "Paromedia," A Parody ANIMEDIA • "Cyber-11" Book • Mutsumi Inomata and PATLABOR Poster • "Best Twelve" Stickers

ANIME V (Gakken)

NEWS & UPDATES: "Top News," ARSLAN III and GRADUATION • Close-Up on NG KNIGHT RAMUNE & 40 DX and KO CENTURY THREE BEASTKETEERS II • More
REGULAR FEATURES: New OAV Navigator • Catch Up With Popular Voice-Actors • "Create Your Own OAV" • The Column Battle Royale • The New Items • Anime Scramble • Video Games Section • Music & Event Info • Readers' Page • More

SPECIAL FEATURES: Interview with CLAMP • SONIC SOLDIER BORGMAN 2, "B-2 Wave" • "PLASTIC LITTLE," A Serialized Novel by Yoshimoto and Urushibara
MANGA FEATURE: NADESHIKO SHICHIMI ("Udon the Pepper Beauty") by Takeru Miyao
GIVEAWAYS: CYBER FORMULA Poster • RAMUNE 40 & DX Poster

NEWTTYPE (Kadokawa)

NEWS & UPDATES: 100th Issue Anniversary Special Includes "Go to Gibraltar," V-GUNDAM Special Close-Up • "Who's That Girl?" Info on Third Season of SAILOR MOON R • More

REGULAR FEATURES: The Official Art of KO CENTURY THREE BEASTKETEERS II • Newtype Express • Anime Land • Express • Scramble • Newtype Forum • Fanzine Review • AV Marketplace • Modeling Section • More

MANGA FEATURES: FIVE STAR STORIES by Mamoru Nagano • DARK ANGEL by Kia Asamiya • MARIONETTE GENERATION by Haruhiko Mikimoto
SHORT STORY: "Equal Genesis," by Takahashi and Murase

GIVEAWAYS: V-GUNDAM Poster by Hajime Katoki • "NT 100 Perfect File," Collection of Covers, Various Info

Japan publishes more books and magazines than any other nation in the world. Naturally, this means more publications devoted to anime and manga. Use this handy guide to keep up with the exciting (but sometimes confusing) anime and manga publishing world.

A Unique Perspective from our Manga and Anime Insider **FROM THE FOREST**

As a manager of Manga no Mori ("Comics Forest"), the largest comic/anime merchandise specialty chain in Japan, **Takashi Oshiguchi** has been involved in the industry not only as a retailer but as a journalist for more years than he can count. In addition to his many articles, Oshiguchi writes occasionally for ANIMAGE magazine and has had his own column in the comic trade journal COMIC BOX.



THE POPULARITY OF AMERICAN COMICS IN JAPAN

In Japan, American comic books (or *amecomi* as they're also known) have a very low profile. Although a certain number of Japanese translations of American comics have been published in the past, all of them were handled by people who had no grasp of the Japanese comic market and, without exception, each of these hybrids have failed.

Japan is a rather insular country in the first place and there's a marked lack of knowledge not only about American comics, but about foreign comics in general. More often than not, retailers specializing in foreign books have no knowledge about the product and stock Marvel and DC Comics in equally haphazard measure. Slim selections are made worse by importing titles two months late and retailing them for four times the American price.

Despite all these dispiriting conditions, there is a handful of fans who regularly order from American dealers, even travel to America to try and read American comics. Although it would be unrealistic to number them at more than a few thousand, among those few thousand Japanese fans Marvel Comics command high popularity. Born from the popularity of made-for-TV movies such as *Spiderman* and *The Incredible Hulk* broadcast in Japan, grassroots fans of the American superhero genre in Japan do exist.

Reflecting this popularity is a Japanese manga version of the American classic *Spiderman*, drawn by a then-unknown Ryoichi Ikegami (*Crying Freeman*, *Sanctuary*). Rumiko Takahashi, the manga legend herself, has gone on record as an enthusiastic fan of Ikegami's version. Currently, it's the popular *Spiderman* villain "Venom" who's gaining admirers in Japan for the simplified lines of his design and for the poisonous appeal of his treacherous character.

But being a bestselling American comic doesn't necessarily guarantee success in Japan. Superhero titles such as Marvel's *Spiderman* and DC Comics' *Batman* and *Superman* do carry their own name recognition, but when it comes to the artists who create those titles, they are in large part unknown. One exception seems to be former *X-Men* artist Jim Lee, whose new Image titles are being carried by only one specialty store in all of Tokyo, much to the bitter disappointment of his Japanese fans who have a hard time finding copies before they're sold out.

Except for a select few of the very biggest titles (*Akira*, *Nausicaä*, *Lum*), American versions of Japanese comics are not generally imported for sale in Japan. Even when the artist is someone like Kia Asamiya, a manga artist who has a strong Japanese fan following, English-translated versions of Japanese manga arouse little interest in mainstream markets. In more specialized markets, however, fans of Asamiya or of other works such as *Battle Angel Alita* will go to great lengths to obtain American versions (regardless of their ability to read English), if only to complete their collection.

A few years ago, Tokyo saw the opening of a single store specializing in American comics. Today, that store's business is booming, and the number of customers and American comics sold has only increased. For example, the *Batman* and *Judge Dredd* crossover became megahit which sold over six hundred copies from that store alone. English translations of Kia Asamiya's manga also sell by the hundreds.

Obviously, the market for American comics in Japan does exist, but Japan isn't being particularly responsive. Perhaps the most accurate diagnosis of the situation is that stores specializing in manga are already overwhelmed by the more than four hundred Japanese titles which come out each and every month, and can't afford to venture into foreign titles as well. But who knows what the comic store of tomorrow's Japan will be like?

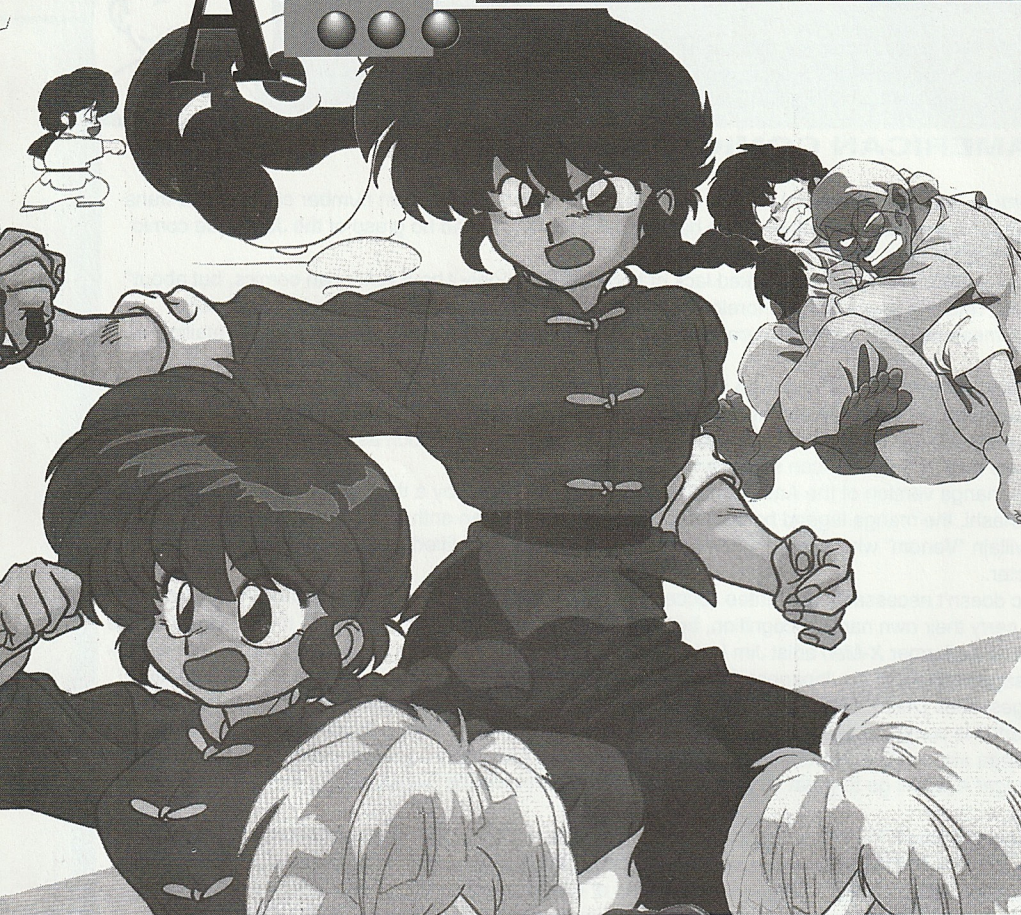
OAV Release Schedule **Coming Soon in Japan**

Direct from Japan, this month's most accurate and up-to-date original animation video release schedule.

★ = Not yet known. ♥ = Series reviewed/more news in this issue. X = Recommended for mature viewers only.

ON SALE	FORMAT	TITLE	ORDER NOS. (VHS/LD)	SOLD THRU	PRICE (VHS/LD)	LENGTH	PRODUCTION COMPANY
8/1	VHS/LD	Ushio and Tora 9	SA4464/★	Shogakukan/Toho Video	¥4800/¥4800	0:27	Pastel
8/1	VHS/LD	Ushio and Tora 10	SA4465/★	Shogakukan/Toho Video	¥4800/¥4800	0:27	Pastel
8/25	VHS/LD	Big Wars	TKVA-60565/TKLA-50103 (CLV)	Tokuma Japan Communications	¥6800/¥6800	0:70	Magic Bus
8/25	VHS	The Biker Gang of Shonan Beach	TMO1406	Toei Video	¥12381	Approx. 0:50	Toei Animation
8/21	VHS/LD	Gunnm, "Tears Sign"	JSVA22202/JSJA22202 (CAV)	KSS	¥5300/¥5300	0:30	Animate Film
8/21	VHS/LD	Cashan 1	★	Columbia Japan	★	0:30	Tatsunoko Production
8/21	VHS/LD	♥Giant Robo • Episode 3	BES-687/BEAL-497 (CAV)	Amuse Video/Bandai	¥5800/¥5800	Approx. 0:35	Mu Film
8/21	VHS/LD	Eight Man Aft • Chapter One	BES-886/BEAL-591 (CAV)	ACT/Bandai Visual	¥4800/¥4800	Approx. 0:29	ACT
8/21	VHS/LD	Comet Machine School Saber • Vol. 1	KIVA-168/KILA-74 (CAV)	King Record	¥9800/¥9800	0:60	IG Tatsunoko
8/25	VHS/LD	Machine God Corps 5	PIVA-1017/PILA-1175 (CLV)	Pioneer LDC	¥4800/¥4800	0:30	Galactic Empire
8/25	VHS/LD	Moldiver 5	PIVA-1011/PILA-1141 (CLV)	Pioneer LDC	¥4800/¥4800	0:30	A.I.C.
8/27	VHS	Kiss Me On The Apple Of My Eye	VIVF-10096	Shueisha/Victor Entertainment	¥4900	0:30	Madhouse

The best of the current releases and the latest news straight from the American anime industry. With the emergence of U.S.-based anime subbing and dubbing companies, it's more important now than ever to know who's releasing what, where, why and how. **Dateline: America** is your one-stop U.S. anime information source.



Viz Video to Release Ranma 1/2 TV Series (in English!)

Last month, we announced that San Francisco-based Viz Communications had acquired the rights to the new Ranma 1/2 OAVs currently in production in Japan. This month, the news is that Viz Video has signed the rights to not only the OAV series, but the entire Ranma 1/2 TV series (all 161 episodes), which they plan to release dubbed into English this fall.

The announcement was made at the second annual anime and manga exposition Anime Expo '93, held over the Fourth of July weekend at the Oakland, California convention center.

According to Viz Comics Managing Editor Satoru Fujii, the first English-dubbed volume of the recently ended Japanese TV series will ship on November 2. Each 50-minute volume will contain two TV episodes. The first volume is scheduled to retail at the special introductory price of \$29.95.

"This is a very exciting project for all of us," says Fujii. "Naturally, we're going to do our best to keep the many fans of the series

happy." Viz Comics, English-language publishers of creator Rumiko Takahashi's original Ranma 1/2 manga series, plan to alternate their release of the TV episodes with their previously announced Ranma 1/2 OAV series. According to Fujii, the first Ranma 1/2 OAV volume is scheduled to ship in December.

After their initial dubbed release, Viz plans to release both the TV and the OAV series in a subtitled VHS format approximately six months later, followed by a dual-track English/Japanese laser disc release six months after that. A line of merchandise known as "Ranma 1/2 Goods" (including posters, t-shirts and calendars) will be solicited alongside. The sale of actual animation production cels from the series is currently being discussed.

"Ultimately, it's the fans who will decide how far we go with this project," says Fujii. "AnimEigo seems to be doing well with their long-term Urusei Yatsura releases; we hope our Ranma 1/2 episodes will prove to be equally popular."

Shazam! It's Zeram

Billed as "sci-fi that reaches out and grabs you," director Keita Amemiya's futuristic live-action

thriller Zeram made its American debut at Anime Expo '93 amidst the collective "oohs" and "ahhs" of an appreciative fan audience.

The story of a "single night's battle between a female bounty hunter and a monstrous space alien," Zeram is a 92-minute film scheduled for home video release in the U.S. through Fox Lorber Home Video.

Although he was virtually unknown before his appearance at this year's Expo, the eye-popping visual effects and abundant charms of the film's female lead (played by Yuko Moriyama) should guarantee that Amemiya's name is one that anime and manga fans will long remember.

"Zeram is something that's been in me for a long time," says Amemiya. "I've been a big fan of the fantastic since I was a child." Zeram is actually Amemiya's second directorial debut (the live-action historical fantasy Future Ninja was the first). Along with co-writer Hajime Matsumoto, Amemiya is also credited with writing the screenplay for Zeram. Future projects listed by Amemiya include a new Zeorymer OAV series scheduled for release next June.

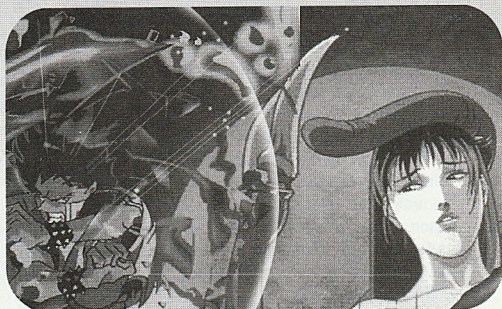
Look for Zeram in video stores near you starting October 6.

From Howling Demons to Screaming Tomcats—CPM's August Releases

Two wildly dissimilar releases—the "erotic grotesque" Urotsuki Doji: Legend of the Overfiend and a classic of the OAV genre, Area 88—make up this month's features from New York-based Central Park Media's "Anime-18" and "U.S. Manga Corps" labels.

The Village Voice called it "exemplary of the darkest and most disturbing side of Japanese animation." CPM's John O'Donnell calls it "strategically important in terms of opening up a mainstream audience for Japanese animation." Fans know it as Urotsuki Doji, possibly the most controversial anime title ever released in English. With the 108-minute theatrical feature (edited together from the first three OAVs in the series) now playing in "midnight movie" venues across the country, it should be easy for most fans to see it and make up their own minds.

Area 88, the 1985 three-volume series which helped to define the OAV genre, is



also available in English this month from CPM. High above a war-torn kingdom, supersonic jets engage in fast and furious battle that explodes on the screen. At Area 88, the site of the most devastating combat, ace pilot Shin Kazama is always in the middle of the hottest fire. The question is no longer whether Shin can earn enough money to return home, but whether he can keep his soul from being consumed by the fires of Asran's war.

Based on the original manga by former Leiji Matsumoto apprentice Kaoru Shintani (*Cleopatra D.C.*, *Desert Rose*), *Area 88* is directed by Eiko Toriumi and features a screenplay by Akiyoshi Sakai. Character design and chief animation is by Toshiyasu Okada, with art direction by Mitsuki Nakamura. (In a related note, fans of the series should be pleased when the *Area 88* English-language manga makes its triumphant return in the pages of this magazine in October.)

Both *Urotsuki Doji* and *Area 88* are scheduled for release on August 11. The English-dubbed *Urotsuki Doji* will sell for the suggested retail price of \$39.95, while the 50-minute subtitled *Area 88* will retail for \$34.95.

Coin a Phrase and Win a Prize for New AnimEigo Dub Line (Really!)

Long known in the industry for their innovative pricing and marketing strategies, AnimEigo has announced that they will begin dubbing selected titles starting with one of their first subtitled releases, 1990's *Riding Bean*.

The innovative aspect of AnimEigo's planned release is the North Carolina-based company's call for volunteer "voice critics," fans who will be randomly selected to receive a voice-test tape later this summer which they will then be requested to evaluate. According to AnimEigo, critics will receive a credit in the video "so

that fans who don't like the voices will know who to blame."

"We've always said that we'd start dubbing when the time (was) right," says AnimEigo. "Over the past few months we've been auditioning voice-actors for the major roles, and have narrowed the field down in most cases to two or three choices."

Riding Bean was first released in Japan during 1989. Featuring an original story and character designs by Kenichi Sonoda, the 46-minute OAV credits *Bubblegum Crisis'* Toshimichi Suzuki [see the *ANIMERICA* Interview, May '93—Ed.] with story concept while executive production is credited to Youmex's Junji Fujita.

Fans interested in becoming an AnimEigo voice critic are advised to send in a postcard (not a letter) with their name, address and telephone number to "AnimEigo Voice Critics" at P.O. Box 989, Wilmington, NC 28402-0989. No telephone calls will be accepted.

Since AnimEigo's current slogan, "The Best Movies You'll Ever Read," no longer applies, fans are also encouraged to come up with an appropriate new catchphrase. Send all slogan suggestions on a postcard to the address listed above with name, address and phone number clearly written. (Again, no telephone calls will be accepted.) The winner will receive a complimentary copy of every dubbed tape AnimEigo releases in 1994. In the event that two or more slogans are combined, the prize will be "split appropriately." Identical entries will be arbitrated based on postmark, so get those cards in early.

No deadline has been given for either contest.

Retro Rockets Fire! Astro Boy Returns to the U.S.

Just in time for the holidays, U.S. Manga Corps has announced that they will release five brand-new volumes of the classic *Astro Boy* TV series in a special collector's edition to commemorate the winsome tin waif's 30th anniversary.

Based on the original manga by Osamu "God of Manga" Tezuka, the English-dubbed *Astro Boy* ("Tetsuwan Atom" in its original Japanese) TV show played an instrumental role in introducing Japanese animation to American audiences when it was first broadcast nationally in the U.S. in 1963. Tezuka's charming and poignant story of the little robot who longed to be a

real boy holds fond memories for both the generation who grew up watching it, as well as the viewer of today.

Celebrated in art exhibitions and in Tezuka's own 30th anniversary special publication, the series' clean, striking design sense still serves as a model for would-be animators both in Japan and around the world. Progressive and thoughtful storylines (especially a hopeful, all-embracing attitude toward technology) still set the series apart from legions of imitators.

Just in time for the holidays, U.S. Manga Corps' release of the series will feature a special Christmas episode titled "The Wonderful Christmas Present." Each 50-minute volume will include two unedited TV episodes in their original black and white and will list at the suggested retail price of \$14.95. ★

VIDEO CLIPS AMERICA'S TOP SELLERS

The Bestselling Animated Videos, Compiled by Capital City Distribution, Inc. (July, 1993)

- 1 ...**Harmageddon**
U.S. Manga Corps • \$39.95
- 2 ...**Super Deformed Double Feature: "Scramble Wars" & "Ten Little Gall Force"**
AnimEigo • \$34.95
- 3 ...**Urusei Yatsura OAV Vol. 5, "Nagisa's Fiancé" & "The Electric Household Guard"**
AnimEigo • \$39.95
- 4 ...**Odin (Dubbed)**
U.S. Manga Corps • \$29.95
- 5 ...**Robotech: Macross Saga Vol. 1**
Streamline Pictures • \$19.95
- 6 ...**Robotech: Macross Saga Vol. 2**
Streamline Pictures • \$19.95
- 7 ...**Robotech: Macross Saga Vol. 3**
Streamline Pictures • \$19.95
- 8 ...**Robotech: Macross Saga Vol. 5**
Streamline Pictures • \$19.95
- 9 ...**Robotech: Macross Saga Vol. 4**
Streamline Pictures • \$19.95
- 10 ...**Robotech: Macross Saga Vol. 6**
Streamline Pictures • \$19.95

Although it's usually the artists who get all the glory, there could be no anime or manga if there wasn't a dedicated corps of people working behind the scenes to produce our favorite pastime. **Anime Q & A** brings you mini-interviews with the industry professionals who make it all possible. By **Jeff Yang**

From the wacky misadventures of supergals A-Ko and Maris, to the infamous excesses of Urotsuki Doji: Legend of the Overfiend, Central Park Media's John O'Donnell has brought some memorable anime moments to American audiences. ANIMERICA caught up with him at the New York premiere of Central Park's latest release, the heartwrenching historical drama *Grave of the Fireflies*.

Q: How did you get started in anime?

A: My first experience with Japanese animation was in the mid '80s. Are you familiar with *Voltron*? We licensed that and put it on video, right during the boom in, oh, 1984, 1985.

Q: This is "we" before "we" were Central Park Media, right?

A: Right. I was already involved with Sony Video Software at the time. We were also releasing other kinds of Japanese animation—things that were aimed at the kiddie market. What became clear was, in terms of selling product to younger kids, the character was either pre-sold or it wasn't. *Voltron* was very successful because it was pre-sold. It was on TV. And every toy company in America was making something related to *Voltron* at the time.

Q: My understanding was that the first foray you did on your own with Japanese animation was for a very different demographic.... Tell me about *I Give My All*. [Note: *I Give My All*, Central Park Media's first license under the U.S. Manga Corps label, was an adult-oriented video about the sexual adventures of a young girl—promotionally packaged with a pair of paper panties in each box.]

A: No.

Q: You won't talk about it.

A: Gone. Dead. Old history. That was the first announced release of U.S. Manga Corps. We released it. Period.

Q: Um...okay. What happened after that?

A: We did *Dominion*. And we've been releasing titles ever since. Our most popular titles have been *Dominion*, *Project A-Ko*, *M.D. Geist*, *Gall Force*, *Rumic World*... that whole (*Rumic World*) series has been doing very well.

Q: There doesn't seem to be a single continuum in the kinds of things you've been releasing....

A: We have three labels under which we release anime. Besides Central Park, U.S. Manga Corps is the label for broad-based entertainment aimed

at your high school/college/young adult crowd. And Anime-18 will be used only for titles which receive—or should receive—an MPAA rating more restrictive than an "R." The first of those was *Urotsuki Doji: Legend of the Overfiend*.

Q: When you first saw it, what did you think?

A: I thought it would be very...strategically important in terms of opening up a mainstream audience for Japanese animation.

Q: That's interesting. I doubt that very many people would consider it a mainstream movie.

A: Well, yeah. Most of our theatrical sites are playing it weekends as a midnight movie, or during the week as a later showing, 9 or 10 o'clock or so. In terms of opening up a mainstream market, what I mean is that it has the ability to attract attention.

Q: I'm betting that the reviewers use words like "appalling," "grotesque"....

A: I have no problem with anyone who calls it pornographic...though I happen to disagree. The word "pornographic" has no meaning. It means anything you don't like. The Christian Right says that *Playboy* is pornographic, so what is the meaning of that word? I do object to anyone who portrays it as misogynistic. There is absolutely no violence in it which is directed toward women which is not also directed toward men.

Q: There is this theme of beastie rape which runs through it....

A: No. It's the bestial violence directed toward human beings. That's the focus of the violence in this movie. The violence occurs between the true "demon" world, the *makai*, and the human world.

Q: Are more volumes in this series, something that Anime-18 is looking to release?

A: Oh, we'll release the sequel, which is *Urotsuki Doji 2: Legend of the Demon Womb*. That was the second theatrical feature. The way it worked was that the first five OAVs were edited together into two feature films; the first feature film was basically OAVs one, two and three, and the second was four and five.

Q: To many anime fans, though, *Urotsuki Doji* raises distress, a bad rap that anime is a kind of sexually explicit, violent thing which will be replicated through the press this film has gotten. Especially since the next major title you've licensed for video is very, very different in tone—*Grave of the Fireflies*. Do you yourself have any qualms about this?

A: Did you every have a foreigner tell you, "I just

saw an American film—*The Terminator*—and all American films are nothing but violent, grotesque science fiction stories, so I'm never going to watch one again"? Has anyone ever said that to you in your entire life?

Q: Um...no. No, I don't think so.

A: Okay. There you go. So why would anyone say, "I once saw or just heard of a Japanese animation called *Legend of the Overfiend* and all Japanese animations are pornographic smut and I'll never watch another one"? How realistic is that? "I once had a restaurant meal and it was bad, so I'll never eat in a restaurant again." That's the level of logic which is encapsulated in those comments. And we just think people are smarter than that.

Q: Tell us more about *Grave of the Fireflies*.

A: In *Fireflies* we have a story which is based on a book which won the equivalent of the Pulitzer prize...the Naoki Prize. It deals with an aspect of the Japanese war which most Americans just don't know about, and aren't taught in schools. We all know about Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Pearl Harbor. What we don't really know about is that the American firebombing of Tokyo killed more people than the atomic bomb. And destroyed more land area. Tokyo was not ever nuked, but Tokyo was leveled. It's a three-handkerchief movie on a scale of one to three. And it's one of the best things I've seen in Japanese animation—on the level of *Totoro* or any of the Miyazaki films.

Q: What do you have coming up in your different lines?

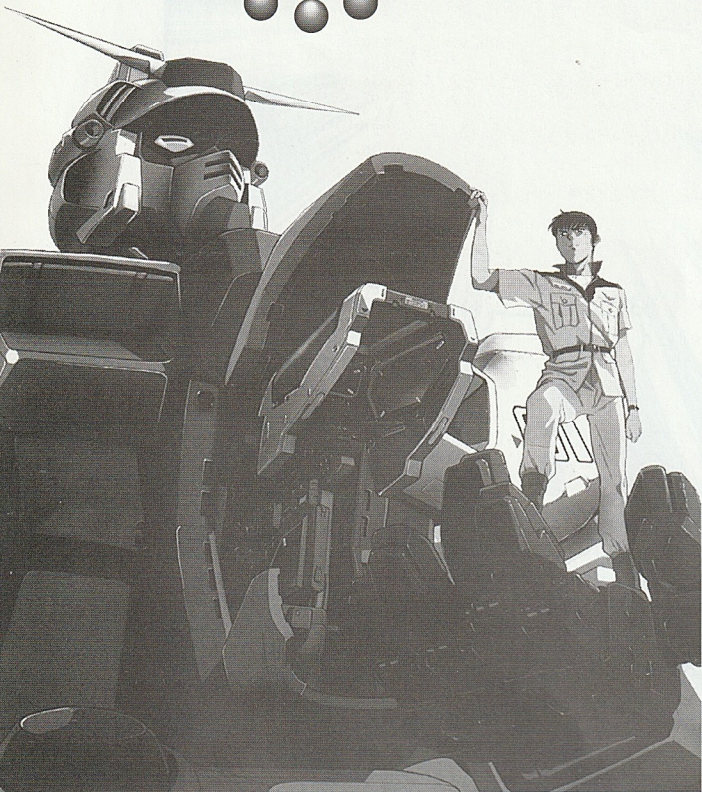
A: Anime-18 will be releasing the original five *UD OAVs*, uncut, in a collector's pack, subtitled. The "Overfiend Perfect Collection." With footage not seen in the original movies—footage that had to be censored out before the Japanese could release it theatrically. The "director's cut," if you will. CPM will release a collection of over thirty animations based on classic Japanese literature. U.S. Manga Corps will continue to have two releases a month. Supposedly *Dominion* is going to continue; they're going back in and do some more OAVs. And we'll be in the bidding for that. [Editor's Note: As of this writing, a new six-volume *Dominion* OAV series was announced for Japanese release beginning October 21.]

Jeff Yang is a New York-based freelance writer.

Video Release Schedule Coming Soon in America

News on the latest releases from the American subtitled and dubbed animation industry. ★ = Not yet known. ♥ = Series reviewed/more news in this issue. X = Recommended for mature viewers only.

SCHEDULED RELEASE	FORMAT(VHS/LD)	TITLE	CATALOG NOS.	SOLDTHRU	PRICE (VHS/LD)	NOTES
8/11	Subtitled VHS	Area 88 Act I, "The Blue Skies of Betrayal"	USM 1047	U.S. Manga Corps	\$34.95	The OAV classic finally in English
8/11	Dubbed VHS	Urotsuki Doji Legend of the Overfiend	A18 1072	Anime-18	\$39.95	The controversial 108-min. film now playing in "midnight movie" theaters nationwide
8/15	Subtitled VHS	AD Police File-1, "Phantom Lady"	AT 093-0 05	AnimEigo	\$34.95	Set in the dark world of BUBBLEGUM CRISIS; first 40-min. vol. in the series
8/15	Subtitled VHS	Urusei Yatsura • TV Vol. 9	AT 092-109	AnimEigo	\$39.95	Episodes 31-34 of the TV series; 100 mins.
8/20	Dubbed VHS	Macross II, "Lovers Again" • Vol. 3	★	L.A. Hero U.S. Renditions	\$24.95	Third and final 55-min. tape in the three-vol. series
8/20	Dubbed VHS	Superdimensional Century Orguss • Vols. 7 & 8	★	L.A. Hero U.S. Renditions	\$24.95	Episodes 15-17; two eps. @ 55-min. vol.
8/20	English VHS	Ultraman, "Toward the Future" • Vol. 9	★	L.A. Hero Ultra Action Video	\$14.95	Australian-produced live-action TV series
8/21	Subtitled VHS	Battle Angel	★	A.D. Vision	\$34.95	Both OAVs on one 60-min. VHS tape ("Tears Sign" & "Rusty Angel")
8/25	Subtitled LD	Kimagure Orange Road • LD Vol. 2	AD 093-002	AnimEigo	\$64.95	Each approx. 100-min. LD contains four OAV eps.
8/93	Dubbed VHS	Robotech • Vols. 1-10	27465-74	Family Home Entertainment	\$14.98	Each 45-min. vol. has two eps. from the TV series



Gundam 0083 Anime Film Comic from Viz

First announced at Anime Expo '93, San Francisco-based Viz Comics announced that they will begin releasing one of the most influential series in the history of Japanese animation, Mobile Suit Gundam 0083, in a deluxe full-color "anime film comic" format starting this fall.

"This is the manga event of the year," said Viz Comics Managing Editor Satoru Fujii. "This project never could have happened without all the help we've received from Sunrise. We're very grateful for all their assistance."

Gundam 0083 is merchandising juggernaut Bandai's 1990 entry in the saga created by director Yoshiyuki Tomino back in 1979 with the original *Mobile Suit Gundam* television series. Featuring an original storyline set three years after the end of the One-Year War (as chronicled in *Mobile Suit Gundam 0080*, "A War in the Pocket" OAV series), *Gundam 0083* is a prequel to the story of 1985's *Zeta Gundam* TV series, focusing on the plans of the Delars Fleet to restore the faltering Zeon Empire. When the Earth Federation initiates a mobile suit arms race, Admiral Aiguille Delars and his surviving Zeon forces must take a stand as loyalties are tested and new alliances are forged

in this most exciting chapter in the *Gundam* saga yet.

"This is a dream project for me, a real dream come true," said series translator Toshifumi Yoshida.

"*Gundam* has always been one of my favorite series. Being asked to translate it for English-speaking fans is a privilege." Yoshida, whose manga resumé includes work on everything from Studio Proteus' *3x3 Eyes* to Toys Press' *Five Star Stories*, is currently working on several titles for Viz including *Silent Möbius*, *Area 88* and *Bio-Booster Armor Guyver*.

Gundam 0083 was released in Japan as a thirteen-volume OAV series beginning in 1991. *Zeon's Fading Light*, a 110-minute film, was released theatrically during August, 1992.

Basically a compilation of the OAV series with about ten minutes of new footage

sprinkled throughout, *Zeon's Fading Light* is extensively re-edited and deletes much of the story's character development and dramatic build-up to the climax.

Viz Comics will begin releasing their thirteen-volume *Gundam 0083* series monthly with the first issue scheduled to ship on November 2. Each 48-page deluxe square-bound issue will be printed in full color using actual cels from the animated series and will retail for \$4.95 USA/\$6.50 CAN.



The Dinosaur that Roared (Without Words)

It's unusual. It's unique. It's utterly unlike anything you've ever seen before. It's Gon, a remarkable short story collection told without words by Japanese manga artist Masashi Tanaka.

The story of a powerful little dinosaur who somehow always manages to get his way (even over such adversaries as giant tiger sharks and vicious burrowing ticks), Tanaka's *Gon* has finally been imported

into the U.S. in a deluxe format which also happens to be printed in Spanish.

"We're importing the Spanish edition because it is arranged in a western format and because it is printed on slick paper which highlights Tanaka's brilliant b&w linework, reminiscent of Berni Wrightson's *Frankenstein* in its detailed cross-hatching and Burne Hogarth in its dynamic action sequences," wrote the industry trade journal *Advance Comics* in their August issue. "Highly recommended."

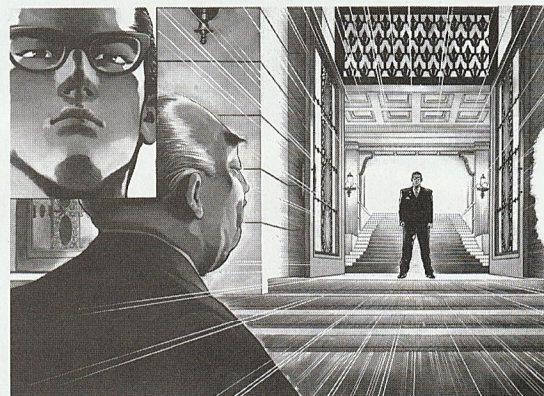
Like *Flash* and *U.P.O.* ("Unidentified Prince Object"), two other titles by Tanaka written completely or almost completely without words, *Gon* was originally serialized by mega-publisher Kodansha in their monthly manga magazine *Comic Morning* before being collected into graphic novel format.

The first volume of *Gon* is printed by Spain's El Vibira Comics and will sell for the suggested retail price of \$13.95. Ask your comics retailer to stock this highly unusual and unique series.

Ikegami to Appear at this Year's San Diego Comic Con!

The extraordinary Ryoichi Ikegami—artist on titles such as *Crying Freeman*, *Sanctuary* and *Mai the Psychic Girl*—recently told *ANIMERICA* in an exclusive interview that he would be making a personal appearance at this year's San Diego Comic Con, scheduled to be held from August 19-22 at the San Diego Convention Center in Southern California.

"We're working very closely with Mr. Ikegami to coordinate his appearance at this year's convention," says Viz Comics Executive Editor Seiji Horibuchi. "I last met Mr. Ikegami in Barcelona at the eleventh annual Barcelona Comics Salon,



and I was surprised to find out how big an influence American comics have had on his career. Mr. Ikegami has wanted to come to the U.S. for a long time, and now that he's finally got the chance he's very eager to meet his American fans."

Sanctuary, one of Ikegami's most critically acclaimed series, is a socio-political thriller written by Sho Fumimura which frequently (some say uncannily) mirrors real-world political scandals in the Japanese government. Better known under the pen name "Buronson," Fumimura is also the creator of *Fist of the North Star*, a wildly popular comic translated in several languages that has attracted its own hordes of fans throughout the world.

Other works by Ikegami are equally well-known, including *Crying Freeman* (with Kazuo Koike) and *Mai the Psychic Girl* (with Kazuya Kudo). Both works have been translated into a variety of languages and are available in English from Viz Comics in multi-volume graphic novel formats.

Fans are encouraged to attend a special slide-show presentation (narrated by Ikegami himself) scheduled for Saturday, August 21 at 10:00 am. to 11:30 a.m. where the artist will discuss his work and take questions from the audience. Be sure to stop by the Viz Comics booth for more information on scheduled autograph sessions.

The Updated Classic by the Manga Master of the Macabre—Go Nagai's Venger Robo

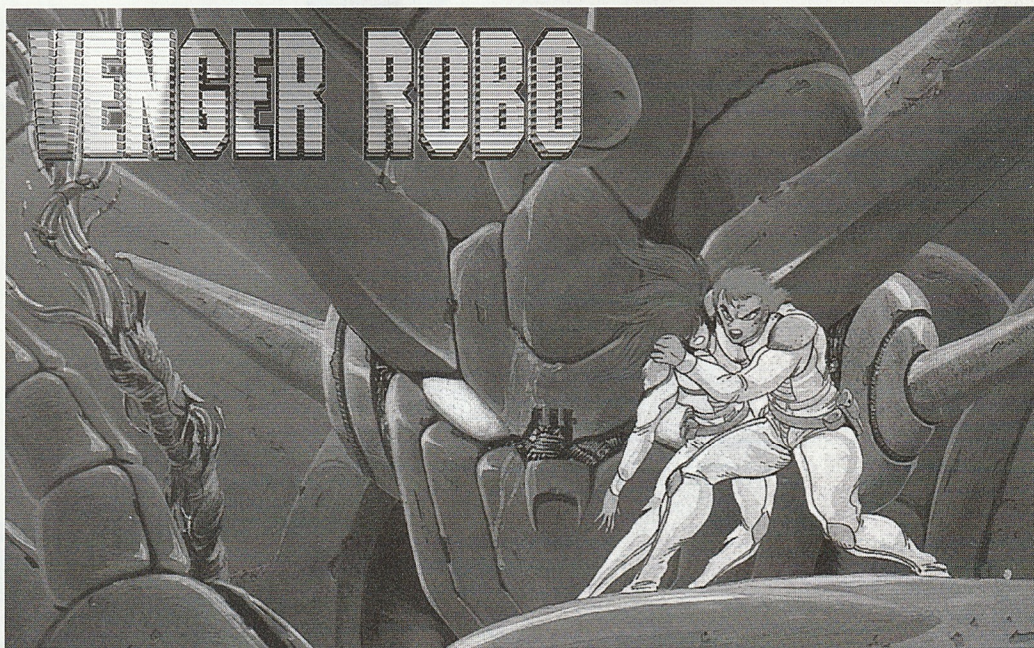
If Venger Robo looks somehow familiar to you, it's because chances are you watched it years ago on American television. Broadcast in English under the title "Star Vengers," Go Nagai's classic tale of transforming robots battling evil forces began as a manga series published by Shogakukan nearly two decades ago and is now the second entry in Viz Comics' new English-language "Viz Manga Heroes" line.

"By releasing the series under the title 'Venger Robo' rather than the title Tokuma Shoten released it under in 1991, 'Getter Robo Go,' we hope to remind fans of the early popularity this series enjoyed in the U.S.," says Editor Trish Ledoux. "Venger Robo is really a sort of fusion between the Japanese and American series, and we want our comic title to

reflect that."

Go Ichimonji, a high school track and field star, is recruited by an organization known only as "Nesser" to pilot one-third of the huge transforming robot, Venger #1. Joining Go in his battle is female pilot Sho Tachibana in Venger #2, who's also the daughter of Venger Robo's creator, Dr. Tachibana; expert mechanic Guy Taido in Venger #3; with the mysterious yet heroic Hayato Jin as the leader of the group. When a mad scientist named Professor Landeau unleashes his terrifying "Metal Beasts" upon a hapless and defenseless population, only Venger Robo can save them!

Featuring a story by Go Nagai and art by Ken Ishikawa, the first 32-page b&w monthly issue of *Venger Robo* is scheduled for a November 16 release and will retail for \$2.75 USA/\$3.75 CAN. ★



Fresh From the Forest

The writer of "From the Forest" and Manga no Mori manager Takashi Oshiguchi recommends the five hottest manga titles in Japan. Guaranteed ripe for reading!

1...Street Fighter II—Ryu

Written by Masamichi Kanazaki • Published by Tokuma Shoten
Manga version of the popular computer game by the creator of *Xenon* (published in English by Viz Comics) and numerous other works. Surprisingly readable.

2...Comet Machine School Saber

Written by Jun Kamon • Published by Take Shobo
Produced in conjunction with the OAV of the same name. Based on the classic "giant robot" genre, this story about (you got it) giant robots fighting invaders from space also happens to be a comedy.

3...Vaelber Saga

Written by Nobuteru Yuki • Published by Fujimi Shobo
The character designer of such popular OAVs as *Record of Lodoss Wars* and *Battle Angel* (released under the title "Gunm" in Japan) debuts with his first manga title. In this fantastic world of sorcery and mecha a pretty girl stars as the main character.

4...Jihad

Written by Nobuharu Sadakane • Art by Kazutoshi Yamane • Published by Shueisha
Multi-platform release (manga, novel) by a relative novice currently the focus of national attention with his publication in *Shonen Jump*, the world's bestselling comic magazine. There's a strong RPG-feel to this fantasy story.

5...Princess Maker

Written by Yumi Konomichi • Published by ASCII
Based on the popular computer game in which players bring a young girl to adulthood (and hopefully, princess-hood) by making various game-related decisions. Second work from the artist of *A.R.I.E.L.*

Japan's Manga Top Ten

1	Protect My Earth • 17 Saki Hiwatari • Hakusensha • ¥390
2	Slam Dunk • 12 Takahiko Inoue • Shueisha • ¥390
3	Poltergeist Report • 11 Yoshihiro Togashi • Shueisha • ¥390
4	Keep the Sash Tight! Katsutoshi Kawai • Shogakukan • ¥390
5	Dragon Quest • 15 Various Artists • Shueisha • ¥390
6	CLAMP Campus Detectives • 2 CLAMP • Kadokawa Shoten • ¥520
7	Yawara! • 26 Naoki Urasawa • Shogakukan • ¥390
8	Lovely Soldier Sailor Moon • 3 Naoko Takeuchi • Kodansha • ¥390
9	This is Katsushika Ward's Kameari Parkside Police Box • 80 Osamu Akimoto • Shueisha • ¥390
10	Campus Special Police Deucalion • 2 CLAMP • Kadokawa Shoten • ¥800

The Bestselling Comics, Compiled by Books Nippon, Japan (Manga Released As Of 4/30/93)



Giant Robo

Sold Thru
L.A. Hero
U.S. Renditions

Format
Dubbed
VHS

Price
\$24.95

Length
55 min

Release Date
On Sale Now

Translation
Varies

Notes
Episodes 1 & 7 @
55 min.; 2-6 @ 30 min

Just when I thought that anime production in Japan was gearing down and my collecting days were numbered, along comes *Giant Robo*. Never did I imagine that I'd become instantly hooked on a giant robot series, but this one is so amazingly well-done, I was perturbed that I'd actually have to wait to see the next episode!

It feels, on first viewing, to be unlike most anime we've been used to in the last couple of years. L.A. Hero, in league with U.S. Renditions, have brought us the first 55-minute volume of a jam-packed OAV series boasting an unstoppable ensemble cast of good guys, villains you'll love to hate, mad scientists, fantastic machines, a complex story, and eye-popping animation effects. It's a huge amount of fun.

It's also dubbed. Very, very dubbed. If *Giant Robo* becomes the model for the future of dubbed anime, then we may have finally turned that corner toward high quality for English-speaking audiences. The dubbing is an amazing setup. The English voice-talent is extensive and well-matched with

The American anime industry has come a long way since the early days of *Astro Boy*. Several U.S.-based companies are making it easier than ever for non-Japanese-speaking fans to keep up with their favorite shows. In this section, ANIMERICA takes a look at the best in English subs and dubs. By Rick Sternbach

the characters each portrays. They aren't simply reading their lines, but actually acting, breathing life into the characters, whether laughing, yelling or philosophizing. The "run-on" effect from fitting dialogue to the animation is almost unnoticeable, making *Giant Robo* a joy to watch. If I had any criticism here, it would be that in the future, individual voice-actors should be matched up with their characters in the credits instead of simply lumped together.

In what promises to be a multi-volume series, *Giant Robo* follows the desperate efforts of a group of paranormal operatives, the "Experts of Justice," to save famed scientist Dr. Shizuma from the clutches of an evil terrorist group, Big Fire. Shizuma has saved the world but, of course, has also been twisted into a means for its total subjugation as well. Into the opening fray appears Giant Robo and his controller, a young boy named Daisaku.

The action is fast-paced, set in a retro-style world reminiscent of the Fleischer *Superman* cartoons and, more recently, *Batman, the Animated Series*. The overall visual look, from story concepts and character design to background artwork and special-effects animation, contains threads recalled from a variety of earlier sources, woven together seamlessly. If you feel you're watching a new take on styles borrowed from *Astro Boy*, *Johnny Socko*, *Akira*, *Gunbuster*, *Nadia*, *Oneami*s and countless other works, it may be that *Giant Robo* was deliberately designed to trigger your mind in that manner.

The animation quality is superb, ranging from bright and vivid to dark and moody, even monochrome, with frenetic, stark contrasts. The video transfer is super-sharp. Flashback sequences with Dr. Shizuma and former colleague Franken von Fogler and their relationships are particularly strange and disquieting, and begging for explanation—well-crafted teasing to get you to stay with the show! The characters are all well-defined through expression and dialogue, especially Taisou and Tetsugyu, the two brotherly warrior Experts who provide a humorous balance to the darker tones of the

film. They're dangerously nuts together.

The music, which provides the usual accompaniment to the action, also contains a number of operatic passages to emphasize the dark strangeness. One might expect this of a more "arty" or psychological film like *Manie Manie/Labyrinth Stories*, making *Giant Robo* even more unlike recent anime. The hi-fi stereo of both the music and dialogue is strong and clear.

Don't wait until you've collected all the episodes to enjoy the adventure. This first tape bears viewing at least a couple of times to catch all the fun. L.A. Hero/U.S. Renditions had better hurry up with the next one! ★

ALSO RECOMMENDED:

DIRTY PAIR, "THE NOLANDIA AFFAIR"

It had been too hot in Tinsel Town when a friend in the biz slipped me the dub. The trepidation in his voice was palpable as he said, "I haven't seen this yet, honest." He knew I would be listening for...*Kei's voice*. It was nowhere near as Russian-growly or as loud as we all know it is, and although voice talent for both Kei and Yuri sound as if they belong in a shopping mall and not high-tech danger, the dub does make the story clearer. For those familiar with Haruka Takachiho's famous troubleshooters, this tape should at least partially satisfy your *Dirty Pair* craving.

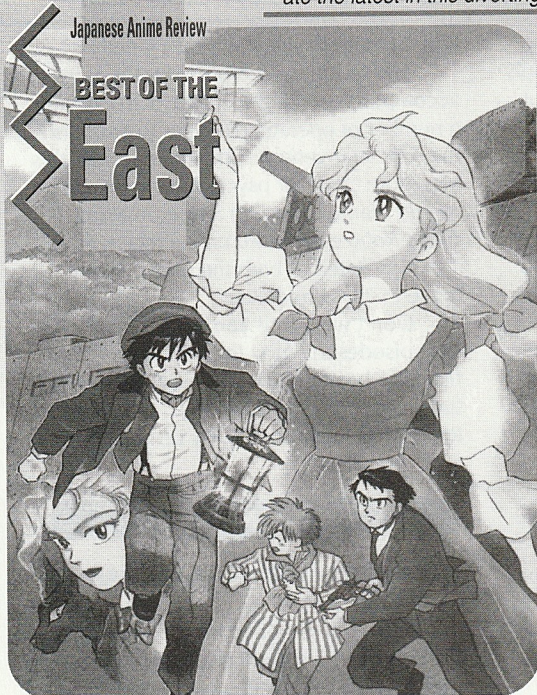
METALSKIN PANIC MADOX-01

AnimEigo's classic subbing of this time-tested fan favorite has been around for a few years now but bears a mention as well as repeat viewings. You can count on the same quality subtitling that made their *Bubblegum Crisis* LDs the choice over imports. Hi-fi stereo is clean with a good range, and the video transfer is bang-on. The added short "Weapons of Madox-01" live-action film is a treat for hardware enthusiasts, showing various aircraft and armor of the Japanese Self-Defense Force at work. Many of the vehicles are faithfully reproduced in the anime.



Rick Sternbach is best known for his work as senior illustrator/technical consultant on *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION* and the *STTNG* spin-off *DEEP SPACE NINE*. He has twice been honored with science fiction's prestigious Hugo Award for Best Artist, and won an Emmy as an assistant art director on the PBS series *COSMOS*. His list of favorite anime goes at least as long as his art credits, and when he's not wheeling *STTNG*'s writers into including anime in-jokes in the scripts, he studies Japanese with his young son Josh through his abundant anime laser disc collection.

More than just entertainment, anime is one of Japan's most valuable (and enjoyable) forms of cross-cultural communication. In this section, ANIMERICA asks Japanese and U.S. industry professionals to evaluate the latest in this diverting and enriching art form. By **Yoshitaka Ishigami**



Japanese Anime Review

BEST OF THE East

Tales of Apfeland

Sold Thru
Tokuma Shoten

Format
VHS/LD

Price
¥8800/¥8800

Length
90 min.

Release Date
On Sale Now

Notes
Single-Shot OAV

Apfeland, 1905—A tiny European country faces the threat of invasion from neighboring Germany while a young boy and girl struggle to save their idyllic homeland from the approaching war in the latest original animation video from Yoshiaki Tanaka, creator of *Legend of the Galactic Heroes*.

Popular fiction is currently booming in Japan and many publishers have been quick to proffer exceptional science fiction, adventure, fantasy and juvenile fiction titles in rapid succession. Known as the company who nurtured reigning anime and manga maestro Hayao Miyazaki into a world-class artist and filmmaker, Tokyo-based publisher Tokuma Shoten has been especially enthusiastic in cultivating such popular writers and is equally enthusiastic about bringing their fiction titles to the screen in animated form.

First serialized in manga form in *Animage* magazine by Keiko Fukuyama, the animation for *Apfeland* is strongly based on Fukuyama's character designs. The story of Fukuyama's debut as a manga artist is actually quite interesting, as she started out as an anime fan who wrote in to the foreign animation club newsletter

"Anido," led by Takashi Namiki. Fukuyama, whose realistic yet charming character designs and simplified yet assertive linework has captivated readers of all ages, is currently publishing in the monthly *shojo* or girls' manga magazine *Nakayoshi*.

Additional character design for *Apfeland* are by Minoru Yamazawa (animation director, *Cleopatra D.C.*), with production by J.C. Staff. Animation direction is by Yamazawa and Hirohide Shikijima (animation director, *Dark Cat*). Art direction is by Mitsuki Nakamura (art director, *Nausicaä of the Valley of Wind*). Voice-actors include the popular Kappei Yamaguchi ("male Ranma," *Ranma 1/2*) as "Virgil," with Hiroko Minaguchi ("Yawara," *Yawara!*) as "Freida," Masashi Ehara ("Papa," *Minky Momo*) as "Inspector Fleischer" and Masako Katsuo

("Memory Gene," *Sonic Soldier Borgman*) as "Arianna."

In *Apfeland*, you can feel creator Tanaka's affinity for Germanic Europe, and although the film is not overly extravagant with its spare style, it is a fine example of Tokuma's commitment to making quality children's animation.

Desert Rose, "Revelations of Snow"

Sold Thru
Toei Video

Format
VHS/LD

Price
¥12381/¥4800

Length
45 min.

Release Date
On Sale Now

Notes
Featuring designs by
Area 88's
Kaoru Shintani

The third animated work from *Area 88* creator Kaoru Shintani, *Desert Rose* is a women-take-the-lead tale of international intrigue in a new OAV from Toei. Shintani's style is wonderfully suited for animation and his many fans are dedicated to his works, not only for his superb sense of entertainment and distinctive characters, but for his celebrated dedication to mechanical detail.

After his well-known (well, in some circles) marriage to *shojo* manga artist Kayono Saeki, it's rumored that the women in Shintani's stories have become sexier. Be that as it may, all the leading characters in this new saga are women and are thor-

oughly capable of going toe-to-toe with the world's espionage elite.

Based on the original manga published by Hakusensha in *Young Animal* magazine, *Desert Rose* depicts the activities of the all-woman international counterterrorist organization CAT ("counterattack terrorism"). Shintani's charismatic characters are on par with the supranational activities of *Golgo 13* and *Lupin III*, and the impressive designs definitely hit the bullseye of entertainment.

Animation staff is transplanted directly from a previous Shintani work, *Cleopatra DC*, so it's only natural that the animation has a similar look. Production is by J.C. Staff, with supervising direction by *Cleopatra D.C.*'s Hisayuke Yoshinaga and direction by Yasunao Yashiki. Art direction is by Jin Nagao. Characters designs are by Minaru Yamazawa, with mecha designs by Satoru Shishido. The popular amateur rock group New Rose provides the music.

The series' numerous voice-actors include Yuko Sasaki ("Shi-Tau," *Zeorymer*) as "Marie," Ai Orikasa ("Ryoko," *No Need for Tenchi!*) as "Helga," Kazu Ikura ("Mora," *Gundam 0083*) as "Della," Chiako Honda ("Nami," *Silent Möbius*) as "Irene," Hiroko Emori ("Anna," *SPT Layzner*) as Jessica, Yuko Mizutani ("Apple," *Zillion*) as "Lynn," Yuka Amano ("Moemi," *Video Girl Ai*) as "Colleen," Banjo Ginga ("Giren Zabi," *Mobile Suit Gundam*) as "Commander Heineken" and Akiko Yajima ("Eriko," *Idol Legend Eriko*) as "Timmy."

If there is anything to complain about in this video, it might be its length. Rather short at forty-five minutes, numerous characters and a rather simple ending can't help but take away a little of the mystery. Even that isn't too bothersome if you consider *Desert Rose* to be a single episode in a series, rather than a single-shot OAV. Multi-audio on the laser disc release is an interesting experiment, but I'm not sure that it was worth sacrificing the digital soundtrack for. At any rate, *Desert Rose* is a fine example of Shintani's entertaining and exciting storytelling. ★



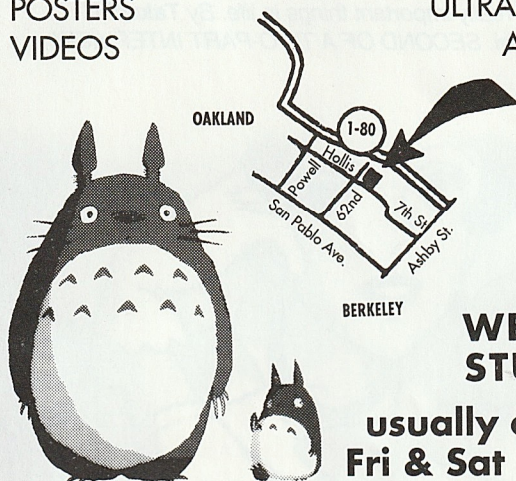
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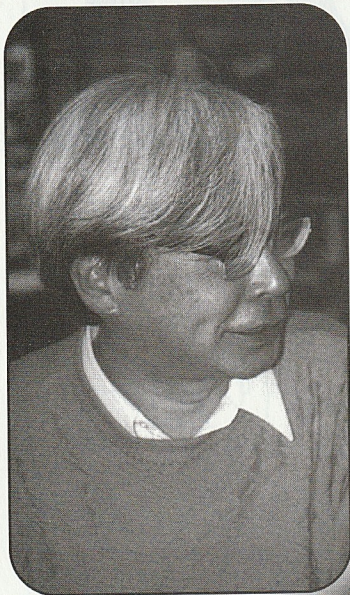
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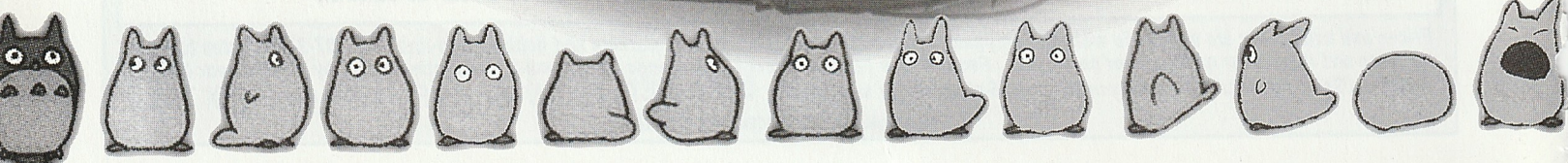
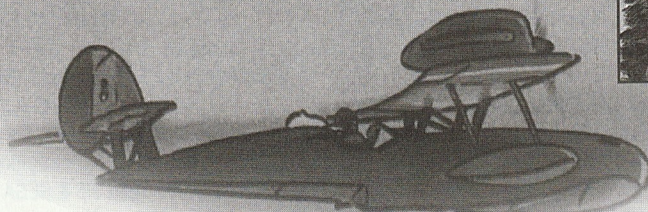
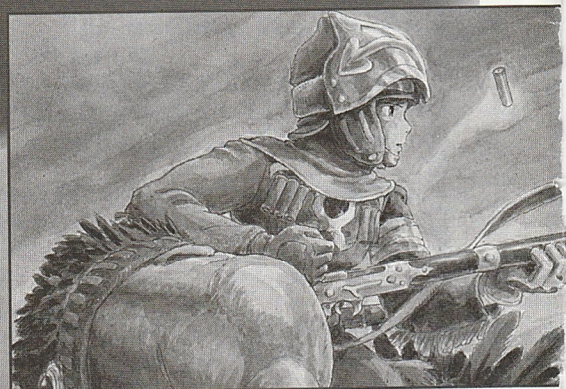
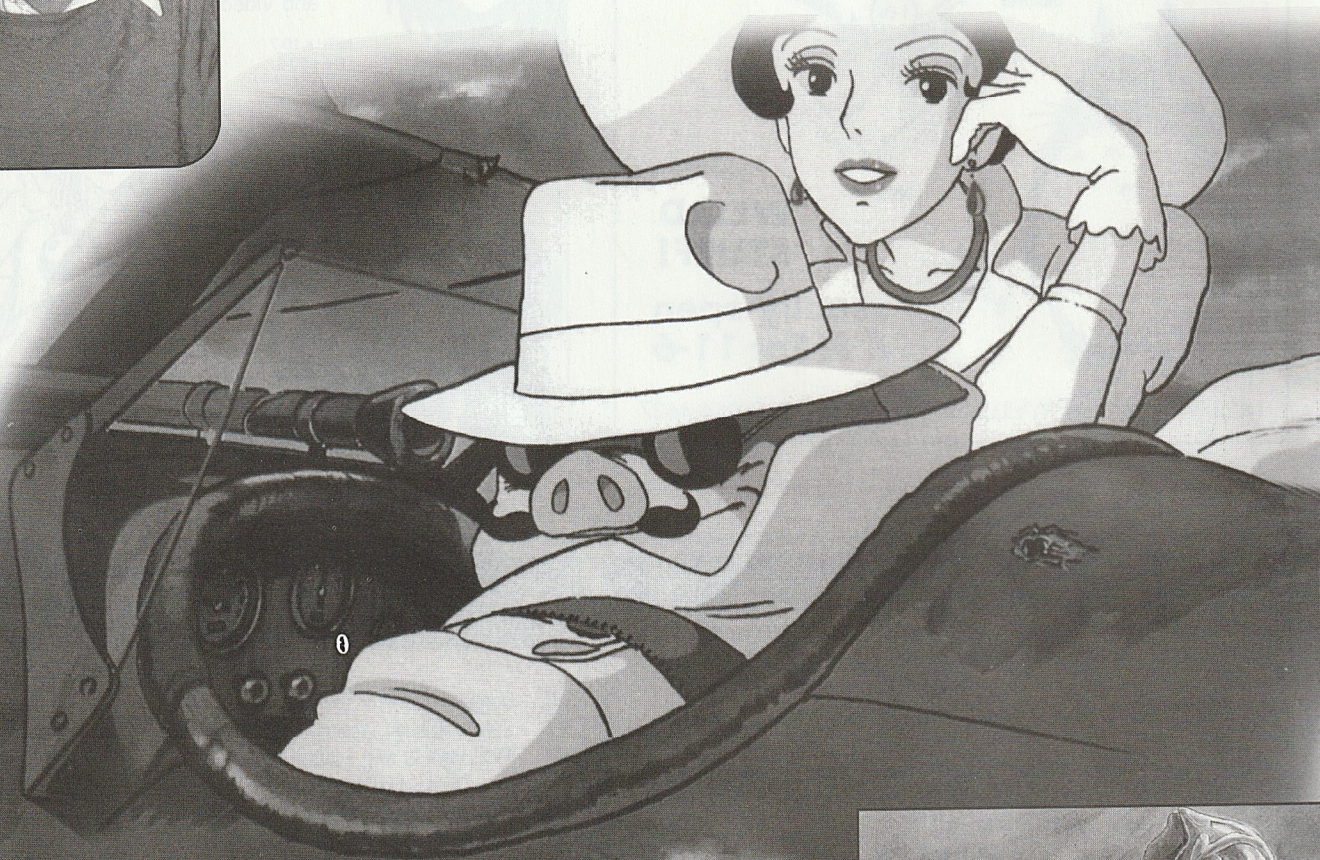
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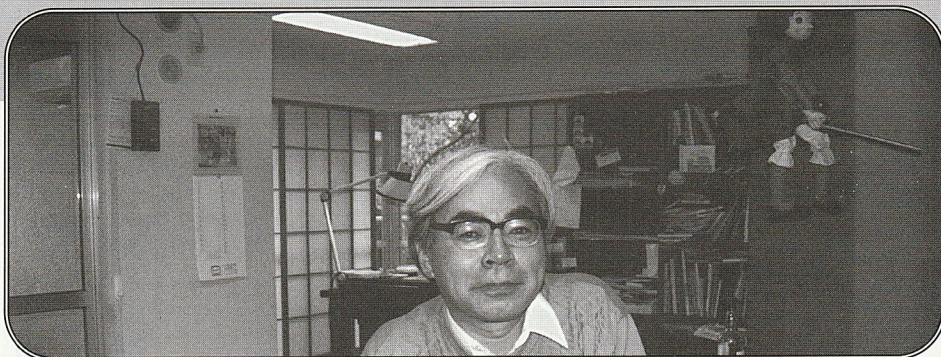


Exclusive! The ANIMERICA Interview
The Whimsy and Wonder of

Hayao Miyazaki

The man responsible for putting the pride back into Japanese animation shares personal insight on some of his most famous films, reveals a complex relationship with director/producer Isao Takahata, and talks about the really important things in life. By **Takashi Oshiguchi**, translated by **Takayuki Karahashi**. SECOND OF A TWO-PART INTERVIEW





I define a producer as someone whose fate is intertwined with his film, sharing the joys and heartbreaks of every precious frame.

ANIMERICA: We asked you last time about your work. This time, we'd like to focus on Hayao Miyazaki the man. When you're not busy creating animation or doing manga, what do you do for relaxation?

MIYAZAKI: When I have the time, I like to go up to a cabin I have in the mountains. Sometimes friends will come by to visit me, but I also like to spend time alone. It reinvigorates me, hiking those mountain trails. After working on a film, it usually takes half a year for me to recover my mental and physical balance. I have to set aside time to recuperate. I guess when you add it all up, I'm not really working *that* many hours [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: One thing about the industry which isn't all that well-known abroad is the incredible amount of women working in the actual production of animation. What sort of relationship do you enjoy with the female members of your staff?

MIYAZAKI: One thing I've learned from working with women is that they have the ability to persevere. Men may be faster out of the gate, but I also think men's concentration tends to lag over a period of time. Women, though...they can really dig in there for the long haul, once the goal is set. My experience is that when working with a big staff, it's always best to have as diverse a group as possible. Group dynamics are always the same, after all; you're just as likely to find the same ratio of "good people" in a group of priests as you are in a motorcycle gang. By "good people," I mean those who can lead and influence the whole group.

ANIMERICA: How about on a personal level? What about women in general?

MIYAZAKI: I don't really have a view toward women in general—like anyone else, there are those whom I like and those whom I don't. But then again, I can usually get along with just about any member of the female sex, so maybe it's correct to say I'm susceptible to feminine charms [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: Even when you're acting only as a producer, I understand that your approach to making films is very hands-on. What do you do when you *can't* get as involved in the actual production? Are there any directors whom you feel you could entrust one of your films to?

MIYAZAKI: No, but believe me, I'm looking [LAUGHS]. The fact that my name was listed as producer on a recent Takahata film [*Falling Tears of Remembrance* or "*Omohide Poro Poro*," produced by Studio Ghibli and released in 1991—Ed.] should be taken as nothing more than an effort on my part to reassure the investors. I didn't do much more producing than that. There are those who define a producer as someone who greenlights a project, secures consent from investors and assembles the staff—especially the director. I define a producer as someone whose fate is intertwined with his film, sharing the joys and heartbreaks of every precious frame. In that sense, as a producer, I was a failure.

ANIMERICA: "A failure"....?

MIYAZAKI: I left everything up to Takahata, you see. We both knew that my involve-

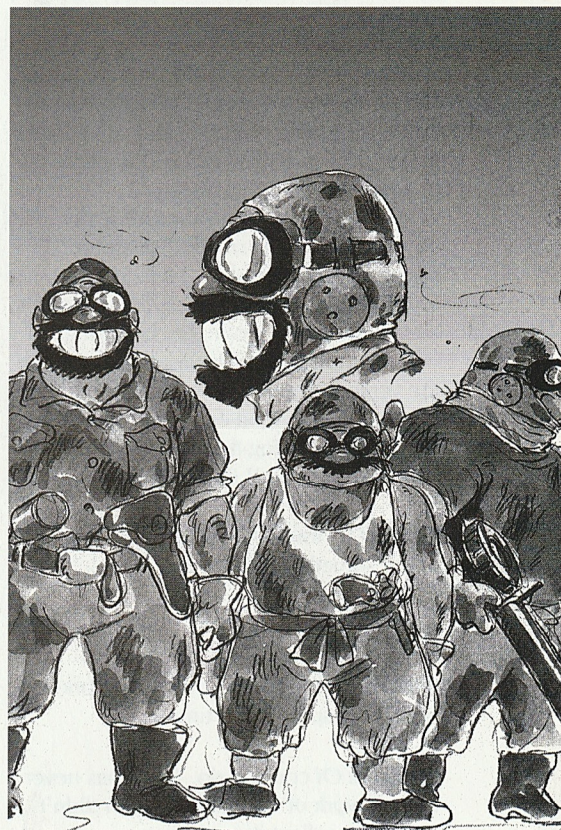
ment as a producer in the film would mean conflict. It was inevitable. Neither of us are the compromising type. The same thing happens when he acts as producer on *my* work. Ghibli desperately needs a new, talented director. We have yet to find one. At this rate, I'll be forced to keep participating in the actual production of the film no matter *how* old I get. I wonder how realistic that is....

ANIMERICA: But you're still fairly young—you're still in your fifties, right?

MIYAZAKI: I am a director who actually *draws* animation. Maintaining my current level of involvement can't possibly last much longer. Believe me, I'll be the first to recognize my own limits. And I'd like to retire before someone suggests it to me [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: Is this age speaking, or are we talking about the artistic sensibilities between a director and his audience?

MIYAZAKI: It's not my sensibilities. Up until now, the animation I've been creating has been that which I enjoy myself, and that seems to have worked out okay. No matter how old or young you are, I think it's time to step down when your audience no





No matter how old or young you are, I think it's time to step down when your audience no longer enjoys your work, even though you yourself might.

longer enjoys your work, even though you yourself might. This doesn't apply to me, of course...not yet, anyway [LAUGHS].

ANIMERICA: So this talk about retiring is basically a matter of stamina, then.

MIYAZAKI: Yes, stamina and concentration. You can bolster your stamina with your concentration, but it doesn't necessarily work the other way around. My particular Achilles heel is my worsening eyesight. It seems to be lowering my concentration. It all comes down to how far you can push yourself. When you're making a film your life has to revolve around it, both sleeping and awake. You've got to dedicate all your hours to it. Only then can you actually say to yourself, "Hey, I'm making a film!" It's a tough row to hoe, but you can't really break through the "shell" of your "common sense" in any other way. If you can manage it, get really, intensely involved, you don't even catch colds, no matter how fatigued you might become. The last time I was on the verge of coming down with something, I swear I had to fend off the invading cold viruses by chewing them up with my teeth. Isn't that wretched? [LAUGHS]

ANIMERICA: How depressing.... Let's talk about something else.

MIYAZAKI: Okay.

ANIMERICA: Do you feel that your works reflect the spirit of the times?

MIYAZAKI: Of course I do. There has never been a work of art created which didn't somehow reflect its own time.

ANIMERICA: Well then, let's talk about that. What kind of influences do you see in your works of the '70s and '80s?

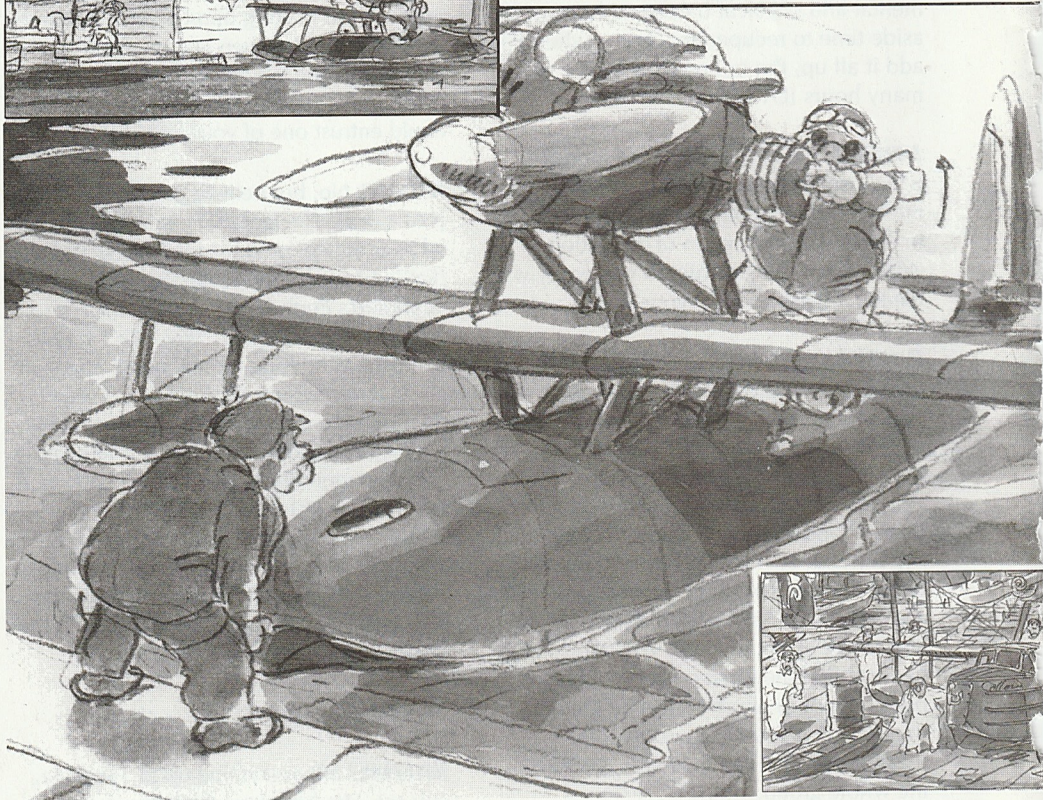
MIYAZAKI: That's not for me as a filmmaker to explain. The audience should be able to intuit where I'm coming from. I will give a few simple clues, though. *Nausicaä* comes from the new world views regarding nature which came about in the '70s. *Laputa* is my challenge to the children who felt the world and therefore their lives were getting smaller, the possibilities more finite. You could say that among the children of the '70s and '80s those sensibilities were nothing more than the negative result of that new world view. *My Neighbor Totoro*, now... *Totoro* is where my consciousness begins. It explains how my mind works. That the film was actually made in the first place says something important about what kind of era the '80s was. *Kiki's Delivery Service* shows another side of the '80s, that of Japanese economic prosperity. Even

back then, I realized that just like the '80s, *Kiki* was sincere but somewhat lacking in energy. For various reasons, it was a movie I had to make. Commercially, it was a success, but it left me with a personal sense of regret. *Crimson Pig* is a product of the early '90s, of my world views being challenged by real-world events. It's also the product of my resolve to overcome that challenge and build a stronger way of life, a stronger way of looking at things. Right now, I feel as though I understand my own philosophical conundrums a bit better than before, but the answers don't come to me easily, and I'm certain that my next work will reflect that.

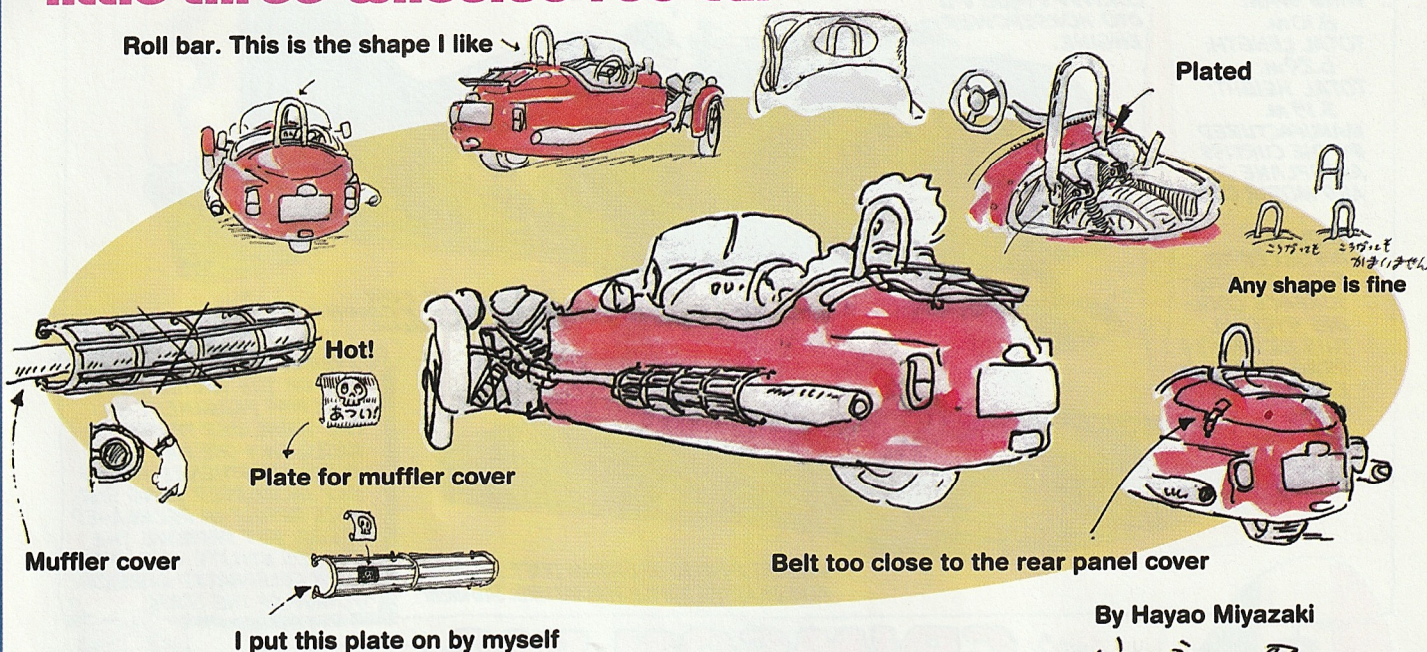
ANIMERICA: It sounds as though you're moving on to your next creative plateau.

MIYAZAKI: That would be nice, but ultimately it's my own talents which will determine where I end up. Now that the interview is almost at a close...

***Crimson Pig* is a product of the early '90s, of my world views being challenged by real-world events.**



Miyazaki's handmade English "funny-looking little three-wheeled red car"



Entertaining a group of people is no better or worse than entertaining just one person and making that one individual happy.

ANIMERICA: Yes?

MIYAZAKI: I want to make sure I'm not creating the wrong impression. While it's true that I do have a cynical side [LAUGHS], I'm usually cheerful and enthusiastic about things. Make no mistake—I'm not staying awake nights worrying about my talent or whether it's time for me to be put to pasture [LAUGHS]. I've always been so busy all my life; there's so many things I've always wanted to do but could never find time for before. If I'm going to be retiring from filmmaking, I'd like to devote my time to more important matters.

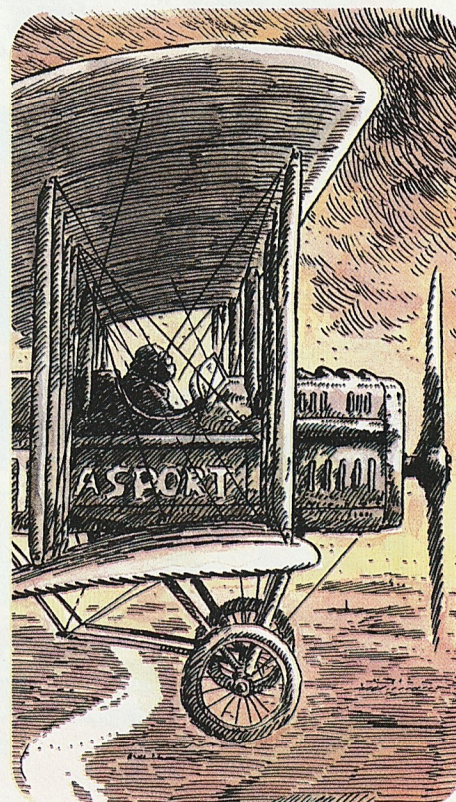
ANIMERICA: Such as...?

MIYAZAKI: Making a film means making entertainment for a lot of people. It's not the sort of thing you can quantify. Entertaining a group of people is no better or worse than entertaining just one person and making that one individual happy. For example—this happened the other day—I have this funny-looking little three-wheeled red car which I use for my daily commute. I was parking it downstairs one day when a small child who was passing by just stopped in his tracks, staring open-mouthed. His eyes were just popping out

in amazement. His mother, who was with him, nudged him to go but he wouldn't budge. Eventually the boy drew closer little by little and extended his hand as if to touch it. My car is a handmade English model, with this bare Italian motorcycle engine sticking out in front, and I worried that he might burn his hand by touching it so I said something really inane like "Don't touch it—that's hot" or something automatic like that. So the boy gave up and left with his mother. Later on, though, I really started to regret what I'd done. Sure, I was busy and pressed for time, but I really should have invited the little boy and his mother to go for a ride in the car. I could have given that boy a fantastic experience, one which would have lived forever in the fuzzy childhood memories of a five-year-old.

When I talk about devoting my time to more important matters, that's the kind of thing I'm talking about. A personal experience like that is more meaningful than any film. *That* should have been the way of someone who presumes to call himself an entertainer. Someday, maybe for some other small child, next time I'd like to give him a ride. ★

ANIMERICA would like to thank Hayao Miyazaki and everyone at Studio Ghibli for making this extraordinary interview possible. The Editor would like to add her personal thanks to the gang on the Internet "Miyazaki Discussion Group" (you know who you are) for providing so much help in assembling this two-part interview. You really ought to think about getting lives someday, guys.... Thanks.



Letters from Our Readers ANIMESSAGES (double the pleasure, half the pages!)

Due to our *Crimson Pig* comic this month, we've only got one instead of our usual two pages so I'll make this quick. I want to thank everyone who came up to the Viz table during the convention and said hello. It was nice to meet you, too! Next time we'll have some mini-interviews for you with the guests of honor, but this month we're outta time and outta space. Onto your letters!



[For more information, please see this month's editorial—Ed.]

Dear Editor,

In response to your plea for female anime fans, I felt that I had to let you know I'm out here. I guess I've been a fan of Japanese animation since I first saw *Star Blazers* in 1982. It was then that I developed my first crush on a cartoon character—Derek Wildstar.

I saw myself in place of Nova whenever the two were together. Now that I'm 20 years old, I still find that I wish I could have a man who looked like Wildstar with that sexy muscular body and great hair.

I also find Ranma Saotome extremely sexy. Whenever I need a good laugh I read the comics. It's my favorite comic book now.

I think that it's important that we women speak out, let the men know that we're fans as well.

Thank you,

Kathleen Lagomarsino
Elk Grove, CA

Oh, Kathleen...a kindred soul! Derek Wildstar was my first anime crush, too. Of course, once you've know the glory that is Harlock, all other men pale in comparison, but still...! You're right that we female fans must speak out—that's why I'm making an effort to encourage female readers to write in. Consider your letter the first in a long series!

Dear ANIMERICA,

Thanks for the story on *Bubblegum Crisis* in the May issue. I only discovered the series a few weeks ago when my local Tower Video establishment started carrying a decent selection of animation, but I've really become addicted to it, so your article could not have been better timed.

I just watched (and thoroughly enjoyed) the last *BGC* episode last weekend, but I've been a little bummed-out since, knowing that there were no more to be had. Getting this new infusion of *Bubblegum* info really cheered me up! I was especially interested in the interview with the creator of the series and the various projects in progress involving plots related to the *BGC* storyline.

Thanks also for the feature on Rumiko Takahashi in last month's issue (and for the

Mermaid Forest serialization). I've also become a big fan of *Ranma 1/2* recently and it was interesting to hear her views on manga in general.

Keep it up! You guys are definitely on the right track.

Jeff Holden
via Internet

If you liked the info on Ranma 1/2 in our April issue, you're sure to like the news we've got for you in this month's "Dateline: America" department! (Hint: Who's got red pajamas, a braided pigtail and really, really hates it when he/she gets wet?) Thanks for the e-mail!

Hey Trish,

I'm writing to let you know that, yes, there are female anime fans out here. I'm a 29-year-old female fan of anime and I've been a fan for almost four years. I belong to an anime club, and while the men outnumber the women about 20:5, we do exist.

I have a variety of interests besides anime, one of which is comic books. It was this interest which first introduced me to anime. I went to a comic book convention with my fiancé and we looked inside a screening room showing what we thought were cartoons. Little did we realize what we about to get into when we sat down to watch.

As far as who is the sexiest male anime character, I have this thing for male characters with long, flowing hair, and Kabuto has got to be the sexiest I've seen so far. I also like the mystery of "D," the vampire hunter.

One dream I have is to one day go to a convention and meet Rumiko Takahashi. She's a true inspiration for any female, especially one who is very interested in writing such as myself.

Thank you for allowing me the pleasure of writing to your magazine. I hope that you get lots of responses from other female anime fans.

Sincerely,

Katheryn Manis
Atlanta, IN

Thanks, Katheryn. The response we're seeing from female fans is amazing. I'll pass along your thoughts on Kabuto to Mr. Terasawa next time I speak with him. About Rumiko Takahashi—if you (if any of you!) would like Ms. Takahashi to come to the U.S., why not drop her a line care of ANIMERICA? We'll be happy to pass them along.

Dear Editor,

Anime (and *Urusei Yatsura* in particular) must be becoming very popular in the U.S., as evidenced by this photo I took somewhere in Maryland!



Sincerely,

William J. Lloyd
Jenkintown, PA

P.S. I think your publication is excellent!

Sorry to shortchange the letters this time, guys, but I'm sure you must feel that having CRIMSON PIG is worth it! Tune in next month for the final installment in this special color manga feature, as well as some great mini-interviews with the guests of honor from Anime Expo '93. As always, keep sending in your cards and letters via regular mail or e-mail to viz@netcom.com. If you'd like your address printed with your letter, please let us know. See you in thirty!

—Trish



The Animessages Poll

ANIMERICA welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, c/o Viz Comics, P.O. Box 77010, San Francisco, CA 94107. We are unable to answer letters individually. Concise, typed letters have the best chance of being published. We reserve the right to edit for space or clarity.

On a
Scale
1-10

ANIMERICA August '93

- ANIME FEATURE: "Masamune Shirow, the Über Artist"
- ANIMERICA SPECIAL REPORT: "Seishinsha, The Little Publisher That Could"
- THE ANIMERICA INTERVIEW: Hayao Miyazaki, Part Two
- MANGA FEATURE: *AD Police* by Tony Takezaki
- MANGA FEATURE: *Mermaid Forest* by Rumiko Takahashi
- COLOR MANGA FEATURE: *Crimson Pig* by Hayao Miyazaki
- Dateline: Japan
- Dateline: America
- Manga Close-Up
- Extreme Close-Up
- Best of the East
- Best of the West
- From the Editor
- Between the Covers
- TV Top Ten, Japan
- Video Clips: Japan
- From the Forest
- Coming Soon in Japan
- Anime Q & A
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In the Next Issue of ANIMERICA...!

Be sure to reserve your copy of next month's issue, when we bring you the final installment of our special color manga feature, THE CRIMSON PIG, the inspiration for last summer's blockbuster hit, printed the way Miyazaki intended...in full color! It's all in the September issue of ANIMERICA, voted "Best Anime and Manga Publication" by the Society for the Promotion of Japanese Animation at Anime Expo '93!

Anime Feature

Ryoichi 1/2

Rogers and Hammerstein. Lerner and Lowe. Gilbert and Sullivan. When it comes to composing one-of-a-kind works of art, there's nothing like two creators joining their talents to create one unforgettable masterpiece. That's why some of the best writers in the industry these days are lining up for a chance to work with Japanese comic artist **Ryoichi Ikegami**. Learn more about the artist of **CRYING FREEMAN**, **MAI THE PSYCHIC GIRL** and the critically acclaimed **SANCTUARY** when our own Managing Editor **Satoru Fujii** talks with one very important half of a manga legend in next month's ever-exclusive ANIMERICA interview; plus some special convention coverage featuring a special series of mini-interviews with this year's **guests of honor** at **Anime Expo '93**.

Manga Features

The Seventh Chilling Installment in the Horror Masterpiece

MERMAID FOREST

Partake of the mermaid's flesh, the legend says, and you'll live forever. But what happens when you don't want to be immortal anymore? **MERMAID FOREST** is a uniquely macabre tale from manga wunderkind Rumiko Takahashi and is exclusive to ANIMERICA

Eighth Installment in the Dark World of Bubblegum Crisis

AD Police

The cyberpunk action continues with the Advanced Defense Police's fight against the evil Genom conglomerate. Based on the popular OAV series of the same name created by Toshimichi Suzuki, the father of **BUBBLEGUM CRISIS**. Another ANIMERICA exclusive, from the pen of **Tony Takezaki**

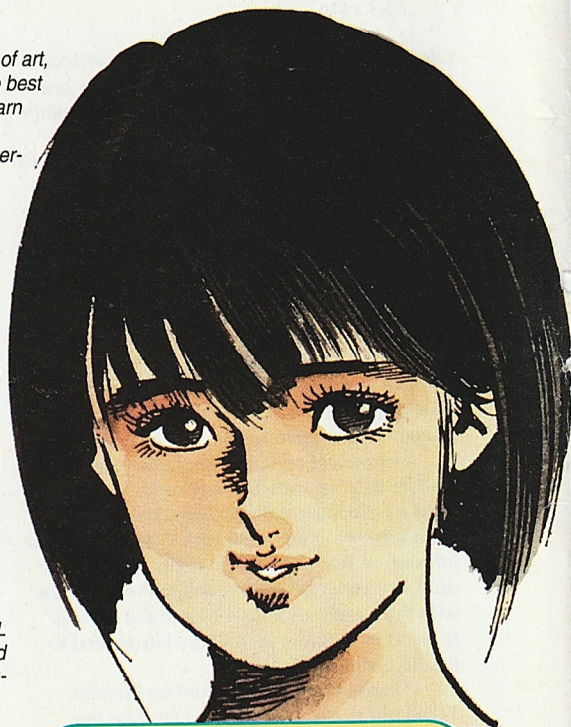
Special Color Manga Feature!

CRIMSON PIG, "The Age of the Flying Boat"

Return to the thrilling days of yesteryear when men were men and pigs were pilots! First serialized in **MODEL GRAPHIX**, **Crimson Pig, "The Age of the Flying Boat"** is the inspiration for last summer's blockbuster film and illustrates artist/creator **Hayao Miyazaki's** lifelong love of flying. Naturally, this third and final installment is exclusive to ANIMERICA

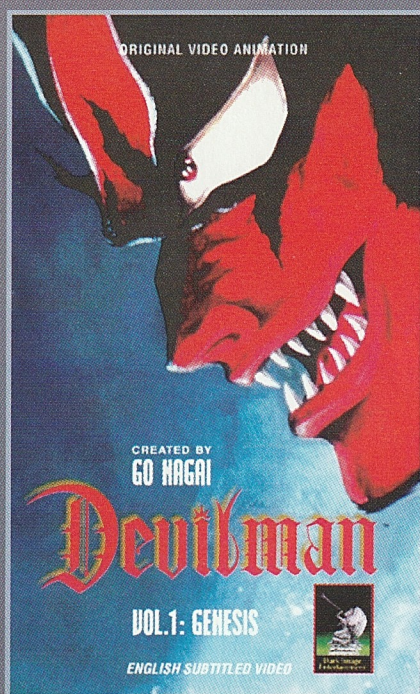
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The Latest News from Japan and America...Reviews of the Hottest Subtitled and Dubbed Anime Titles...
New Developments in the World of Manga...Results of our Readers' Poll and...Much, Much More!



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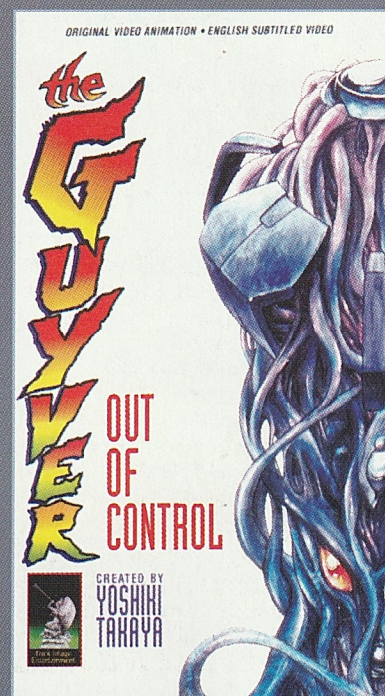
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